

**BERKSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 2023**

BERKSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY

**ANNUAL REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 MARCH 2023**

**CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1076217
COMPANY REGISTRATION No: 03750656**

**Tim D Miller MA ACMA CGMA
105 Redhatch Drive,
Earley,
Reading,
RG6 5QN**

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**BERKSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY
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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER	1076217
COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER	03750656
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR	1 APRIL 2022
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	31 MARCH 2023
DIRECTORS AT 31 MARCH 2022	Conor O'Connor, Chair Adam Bermange, Treasurer Darren Browne Mark Gauguier (appointed 7 October 2022)
REGISTERED ADDRESS	40 Caversham Road Reading, RG1 7EB
DATE OF INCORPORATION	12 April 1999
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	Memorandum and Articles of Association
BANKERS	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling Kent, ME19 4JQ
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Tim D Miller MA ACMA CGMA 105 Redhatch Drive, Earley, Reading, RG6 5QN
OBJECTS	The relief of school age and pre-school age children and adults suffering from autism, autistic-related problems and challenging behaviour, resident in Berkshire.

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Structure, Governance and Management:

The Berkshire Autistic Society (working name Autism Berkshire) is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, both under the name of Berkshire Autistic Society. Our registered office is located at 40 Caversham Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7EB. The governing documents are Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated on 12/04/1999 and amended by special resolution dated 13/10/2015, to update our articles to the 2012 model articles published by the Charity Commission.

During the year we had 1 full-time member of staff and 11 part-time members of staff and a team of regular volunteers. There has been some staff turnover, with some staff having to unfortunately depart for personal reasons, but the charity has maintained capacity and service levels. All staff, both paid and volunteers, are DBS-checked and receive appropriate induction training and ongoing refresher training as required.

We are well supported in our work by our trustees, staff and volunteers, some of whom are autistic or have autistic relatives and friends. Volunteers undertake a wide variety of activities, including administration work, fundraising, helping at events and attending meetings of area forums and partnership boards in local authority areas across Berkshire on behalf of the society.

Objectives and Activities:

Our mission is to help and support autistic people and their families in Berkshire. We aim to enhance the current provision of services and support, with the purpose of improving the quality of life of autistic people of all ages and giving them maximum independence.

We do this by:

- Providing information and advice through a helpline, events, workshops and newsletters;
- Running accessible social and leisure activities for children, adults and families;
- Providing autism-specific training and support;
- Working with education, health, emergency and employment services and the six main local authorities in Berkshire to deliver autism-appropriate services;
- Raising awareness of autism in the wider community to promote greater understanding.

We are frequently consulted by Local Authorities and the NHS on autism services and strategies within the county.

We support children, young people and adults and their parents and carers, from when concerns are initially raised, to when they are placed on the waiting list for an autism assessment, after diagnosis, and life beyond. You do not need a formal diagnosis of autism to be supported by Autism Berkshire.

Achievements and Performance:

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The context in which the charity operates has continued to be challenging as demand for support and access to our services has remained high, with high volumes of referrals from local authorities and key partners. We have also seen large scale restructures of key NHS partners that have presented logistical issues in ensuring smooth continuation of services; it has been our priority at all times that service users do not feel the impact of these administrative changes, sometimes at the charities expense, but we have taken steps to mitigate risks and ensure good connections within our partners where needed.

Staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to not only support as many people as possible within our available resources but also expand the services we have through partnerships and contracts with health bodies and local authorities. Key examples of this are as follows:

1. The Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service, that we provide in partnership with Parenting Special Children, previously on behalf of Berkshire West NHS Clinical Commissioning Group but now NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & West Berkshire Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB), to help autistic children & young people and their families in Reading, Wokingham, and West Berkshire.
 - a. This service has continued to see demand that far exceeded levels seen under previous NHS contracts. The number of people registered on our mailing list grew from 710 to ~1,300 this year with individual contacts rising by 31.4% compared to last year's report from 3,975 to 5,795. We continue to prioritise this well used and valued service and use all the available resources within our contract to support as many people as possible.
2. Drawing on the experience, and success, of the above service a new Berkshire Adult Autism Support Service was launched in late 2022 to transform help for autistic adults throughout the county, following Autism Berkshire being selected by the Frimley Health ICB and the BOB ICB to deliver the service in a competitive tender. While we already support autistic adults through our Bear With Me and 197 Club social groups and our Helpline service, this new contract allows us to not only provide a range of new practical advice and support but also expand our current offers.
 - a. The service provides advice and support to autistic adults who do not meet criteria for support from existing specialist services, such as NHS mental health and learning disability teams, and those on the waiting list for adult autism assessments. Parents and carers of autistic adults can also get advice to help them support their relatives.
 - b. Existing Helpline support was backed up with one-to-one extended advice sessions and regular face-to-face meet-up sessions, to get instant advice, at locations around the county, including Reading and Maidenhead.
 - c. As a charity we are committed to listening to the voices of autistic people and using that to shape our services to be as relevant and useful as possible. Following feedback from adults we received when designing this service we also offer meet-ups for autistic women and for autistic young adults, offering opportunities to meet in a friendly and supportive setting to chat, share issues and ideas and get advice in a relaxed atmosphere, with those taking part encouraged to set the agenda.
3. Completion of Autism Awareness training more than 2,000 frontline police officers throughout the Thames Valley Police area. Officers have learned more about autism and

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been trained to recognise the alert card by staff from Autism Berkshire and our partners Talkback. This was an intensive but worthwhile activity for the charity that saw staff go above and beyond to deliver multiple workshops that have improved the understanding of autism and the capability of police to work with autistic people in the Thames Valley area.

In addition to the above we continue to run a range of well used and received social groups, workshops, training for professionals, and act as a strong advocate for autistic people and their families in our Area of Benefit – often acting as a key conduit between service providers and autistic voices.

There have been some challenges and risks for the charity this year that we have been proactively reviewing and managing:

1. Following further expansion of the Thames Valley regional alert card in 2021-22 we have continued to see high demand for alert cards. While a vitally important service this high demand has not been without its challenges, both in terms of logistics and funding. Due to some staff absence and high demand in other service areas, as well as the need to find alternative income for costs with previous funding coming to an end, we had to pause applications for new cards in Spring 2023 to deal with a small backlog and plan for the future. The trustee board remains committed to this service, evidenced by the fact we funded this for as long as possible out of the charity's funds when previous grant money was exhausted, and is currently in conversation with potential grant funders to help us cover costs to reopen applications.
2. Our Benefit Advice Service saw a reduction in demand towards the end of the 2022-23 period, in comparison to previous years, but we continued to ensure this service was available, supporting clients to receive £352,969 in benefits payments. This service does have a higher per-client cost than our other services and is slightly at odd with our other services that are free, thanks to our key partners, so the trustee board has agreed to keep this under review to ensure we are utilising the charities resources in the most efficient and effective way for the benefit of our service users.

Throughout the pandemic the trustee board has taken difficult decisions to maintain fiscal sustainability, which has ensured support is still available for autistic people and their families in our Area of Benefit. With more normality returning to life post-Covid and with the national focus switching, and therefore funder focus, to dealing with the surge in the cost of living there have been fewer opportunities for grants for the types of services and support we offer. Support from Berkshire-based funders has remained strong, however, with grants being received to continue operating our vital, and well used, services and social groups.

We are consistently searching for funding opportunities, to offer support to as many autistic people and their families as we can, which often means our staff and volunteers respond quickly to requests, sometimes at short notice. An example of this was Autism in Racing's mobile sensory room at Ascot Racecourse, which was attended by members of our team. We had just one day's notice, after another charity dropped out, but the team made the most of the opportunity and raised ~£1,000 in July 2022 thanks to a donation from the racecourse and a collection bucket.

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We have also been fortunate to see a return of community fundraising for the charity, thanks to our amazing supporters and volunteers. In May 2022, for example, Dom Coombes, who attended our trampolining sessions for autistic children and young people at Bracknell Trampoline Centre, and his mother Jo Richardson raised almost £700 for us by taking part in a 5k Tough Mudder cross-country and obstacle challenge event held in Henley, pictured above. The year's community fundraising activity ended on a high note, thanks to the members of the Chorate Chamber Choir in Reading, who hosted a concert of choral music for Lent and Easter in March that raised almost £900 with a collection at the church, an online fundraising page and a match funding donation from Mondelez International, the employer of one of the singers. We had provided autism advice and support to Mary Chambers, one of the members of the choir, and her family.

Mark Gauguier joined the trustee board during the year and brings considerable legal experience which will greatly benefit the charity as we seek to grow and improve. This means our board is now four strong but will continue to look for opportunities to add to the skillset and experience available to ensure sustainability of the charity in the future.

In summary, 2022-23 has presented the charity with continued challenges around funding and logistics but has seen significant success and growth of services thanks to the commitment and hard work of staff and volunteers. With key services seeing significant demand, and continued positive feedback from service users, we are still supporting people where needed. As we look forward to 2023-24, we will work to maintain and develop our offer to autistic people and their families so that we continue to enhance autistic people's quality of life and enable them to have maximum independence.

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities:

The directors are satisfied that for the year ended on 31 March 2023 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 and that no member or members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act. However, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011, the accounts have been examined by an Independent Examiner whose report appears on page 9. The directors are responsible for preparing the report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (Financial Reporting Standard 102 and applicable law). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

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The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. Berkshire Autistic Society is a public benefit entity.

Approved by the Directors on 10th November 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line at the end.

Signed on their behalf by Director and Chair of Trustees: Conor O'Connor

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of 'Berkshire Autistic Society'

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2023, which are set out on pages 10 to 13.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of CIMA.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached



Name: Tim D Miller MA ACMA CGMA

Relevant professional qualification or body: Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Address: 105 Redhatch Drive, Earley, Reading, RG6 5QN

11th November 2023

BERKSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY

Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)

for the year ended 31 March 2023

	<i>Notes</i>	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022/2023	Total 2021/2022
		£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources					
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds					
Grants		6,400	-	6,400	26,250
Membership Subscriptions		5,904	-	5,904	6,349
Donations		6,273	2,251	8,524	16,566
Fundraising and Collections		3,284	-	3,284	2,366
Training Courses		1,650	-	1,650	1,000
Bank Interest		1,401	-	1,401	23
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities	<i>1</i>	-	244,308	244,308	155,712
Total Incoming Resources		24,912	246,559	271,471	208,266
Resources Expended					
Fundraising Trading Costs		380	-	380	-
Charitable Activities	<i>3a</i>	14,021	246,559	260,580	199,852
Governance	<i>3b</i>	1,704	-	1,704	1,851
Total Resources Expended		16,105	246,559	262,664	201,703
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		8,807	-	8,807	6,563
Total Funds Brought Forward		84,296	-	84,296	77,733
Total funds Carried Forward		93,103	-	93,103	84,296

BERKSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	31/03/2023 £	31/03/2022 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	0	0	0	25,000
Prepayments	0	0	0	0
Cash at Bank and in Hand	112,287	144,108	256,395	178,163
Total Current Assets	112,287	144,108	256,395	203,163
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year				
Creditors	367	1,311	1,678	11,514
Accruals	4,147	7,573	11,720	6,792
HMRC PAYE/NI	6,020	-	6,020	2,881
Deferred Income 1	8,650	135,224	143,874	97,680
Total Current Liabilities	19,184	144,108	163,292	118,867
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	93,103	0	93,103	84,296
NET ASSETS				
General Funds	93,103		93,103	84,296
Restricted Funds				
Total Funds	93,103	0	93,103	84,296

**Notes forming part of the financial statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023**

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022/2023	Total 2021/2022
		£	£	£	£
3	Resources Expended				
a)	Charitable Activities				
	Payroll Costs	2 78,643	122,245	200,888	144,849
	Sub-Contracted Providers	-	31,281	31,281	35,501
	Venue Hire	3,401	2,424	5,825	2,112
	Refreshment Costs	44	781	825	168
	Travel	427	2,550	2,977	1,218
	Leaflets & Promotional Materials	-	1,497	1,497	2,622
	Other Activity Costs	-	1,624	1,624	1,434
	Storage/Virtual Office	2,370	-	2,370	2,049
	Insurance	1,923	-	1,923	1,773
	Telephone	1,609	92	1,701	1,564
	Printing, Postage, Stationery	133	469	602	466
	IT & Web Services	3,391	959	4,350	4,150
	Small Fixtures Replacement	1,058	1,299	2,357	1,347
	DBS Fees	-	212	212	63
	Staff Recruitment & Training	36	1,544	1,580	-
	Subscriptions & Licenses	190	119	309	228
	Bank & Fundraising Collection Fees	260	-	260	308
	Overhead allocation	-79,463	79,463	-	-
		14,021	246,559	260,580	199,852
b)	Governance Costs				
	Legal fees	-	-	-	-
	Governance Costs	704	-	704	851
	Independent Examiners Fee	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
		1,704	-	1,704	1,851

1 Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities (Restricted)

	2022/2023	2021/2022
	£	£
Deferred Income brought forward @ 1st April, 2022	97,680	74,222
Income Received	281,852	179,170
Deferred Income carried forward @ 31st March, 2021	135,224	97,680
Income Released to Income & Expenditure	<u>244,308</u>	<u>155,712</u>

We also gratefully acknowledge grants or donations over £250 from the following sponsors:-

<i>Amazon Smile</i>	<i>Louis Baylis Charitable Trust</i>
<i>Arnold Clark</i>	<i>PayPal Giving Fund</i>
<i>Ascot Racecourse</i>	<i>Reading Borough Council</i>
<i>Baylis Media Cracker Fund</i>	<i>Reading Football Club</i>
<i>BBC - Children In Need</i>	<i>Rory Smyth</i>
<i>Berkshire Community Fund</i>	<i>Shanly Foundation</i>
<i>Berkshire Women's Aid</i>	<i>Sir Jules Thorn Trust - Ann Rylands Small Grants</i>
<i>Bracknell Town Council</i>	<i>Slough CVS</i>
<i>Community Impact Berkshire</i>	<i>Slough CVS #One Slough Grant</i>
<i>Crowthorne Parish Council</i>	<i>South Hill Park Arts Centre</i>
<i>Earley Charity</i>	<i>The Headley Trust</i>
<i>Edward Gostling Foundation</i>	<i>The Henry Smith Charity</i>
<i>Frimley Health and Care</i>	<i>The Prince Philip Trust Fund</i>
<i>Get Berkshire Active</i>	<i>Visa Europe</i>
<i>John Sykes Foundation</i>	<i>Volant Charitable Trust</i>
	<i>Wokingham Without Parish Council</i>

2 Staff Costs and Numbers

	2022/2023	2021/2022
	£	£
Gross Salaries and Wages	189,787	136,236
Employers' National Insurance Costs	8,124	6,097
Redundancy Costs	0	0
Pension Contributions	2,976	2,516
	<u>200,887</u>	<u>144,849</u>
Allocated to Fund Raising	0	0
	<u>200,887</u>	<u>144,849</u>

Average full time equivalent of employees engaged:

	2022/2023	2021/2022
Activities in furtherance of organisation's objects	5.49	4.43

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000. Staff are paid through the PAYE system.