

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 04381722 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1092083

A4U
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

TRUSTEES	D Bell (resigned 31.7.24) Mrs C Crackett D Forsyth (appointed 25.10.23) Ms A Hiam M Sadler (resigned 6.9.23) Ms C S Shaw
REGISTERED OFFICE	Louise House Roman Road Shrewsbury SY3 9JN
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER	04381722 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER	1092083
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	TCA (Shrewsbury) LLP Third Floor 21 St Mary's Street Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 1ED

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TRUSTEES REPORT **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution and objects

The organisation was originally formed in 1992 and was registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee on 26/2/02. The company registration number is 04381722, and A4U is a registered charity in England and Wales Number 1092083.

The principal objects of the company, as stated in the constitution are:

- For the public benefit, to promote the relief of people with disabilities and/or ill-health by the provision of information, advice and advocacy services and to assist these people either directly or through their carers, relatives, friends and other agencies.

Method of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association.

A4U is a Disabled Persons User Led Organisation run by and for people with disabilities which include long-term health conditions, mental health conditions, physical and/or sensory impairments and neurodivergence.

Many of our staff and volunteers manage complex workloads whilst living with a disability and/or long-term condition.

We actively encourage people with disabilities to join the team, as trustees, volunteers or paid staff - the power of peer support generates a positive energy that helps to improve wellbeing.

The trustees continue to have regard to the needs of the charity in the changing world and regularly review the skills and expertise required to lead the organisation.

The Board of Directors meet quarterly. Appointments and specific delegated powers are agreed by the full Board at the first meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

Regular discussions take place between the Chair, Treasurer and Chief Officer to review strategic and financial matters between Board meetings. Responsibility for service delivery and day-to-day management of staff, and volunteers, rests with the Chief Officer in conjunction with Team Leaders.

Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

All new Trustees are encouraged, where they have not been existing volunteers, to familiarise themselves with the practical work of the charity and gain an understanding of the culture that drives the organisation. In addition, they are provided with an induction pack of guidance notes detailing their responsibilities, including the main documents which set out the operational framework for the Charity:

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TRUSTEES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

- Memorandum and Articles
- Latest published accounts and Annual Report
- Business Plan
- Key policies

Trustees are required to abide by the NCVO Code of Good Practice for Trustees, encouraged to attend any available training, and take an active role in the organisation wherever possible.

Both our Chair and Treasurer regularly volunteer within the organisation and all Trustees participate when able beyond their role as Trustees, giving a clearer understanding of the operational challenges facing the organisation.

Organisational structure and decision making

The composition of the Board is based on a skills audit to ensure the Board maintains appropriate and effective levels of expertise to manage and develop the organisation in line with the aims of the Business Plan.

We actively seek experts by experience who have the skills needed for the Board.

The business plan sets out the strategy for the charity and is used to underpin all decision making by the Board. This is updated regularly as a working process by the Strategic Review Report completed by the Chief Officer for Board.

Quality Management

A4U is committed to continuous improvement and implementing appropriate quality management systems and processes to enable us to deliver the highest practicable quality services. To do this we:

- work with users of our services to **develop our services to meet their needs**.
- conduct our work in a way that reflects our **core aims and ethos**.
- create an environment that promotes **continuous improvement** and knowledge sharing across all stakeholders.
- ensure **compliance** with legal and other applicable standards.
- **educate and train** our staff and volunteers to support the delivery of high-quality services.

We hold the externally audited Advice Services Alliance Advice Quality Standard for advice, telephone advice and casework for Welfare Benefits, Disability and Health and Community care. We are subject to a bi-annual external audit process in addition to completing regular annual internal reviews of our policies and procedures.

We are a "Disability Confident" employer and also signatories to the Mindful Employer Charter for employers Positive about Mental Health, recognising our commitment to the mental wellbeing of our staff and volunteers.

Safety

A4U is committed to providing a safe environment for all its workers, volunteers, clients and visitors. This duty is discharged by the implementation of a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the underpinning development of live risk assessments for the workplace and relevant public areas. Health, Safety and Wellbeing are a standing item on the Board and Staff meeting agendas and all accidents or incidents are reviewed at meetings.

Risk management

The Trustees assess the major risks to which the company is exposed on an ongoing basis, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate, wherever possible, our exposure to the major risks.

Our risk register is maintained and reviewed at least annually, but also in light of any changes with significant impact occurring throughout the year.

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TRUSTEES REPORT **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

Safeguarding

All issues raised are logged in line with our policy and reported on as a standing agenda item at Board meetings. All staff receive 3 yearly training updates in addition to updates and safeguarding discussions within team meetings and understand processes for escalating safeguarding issues. Trustees use NCVO guidance to review safeguarding and their understanding of it for the charity at every meeting.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Our ethos:

The Individual is Paramount

Each person is in control of their own life. We are here to help them to live that life to the full.

Overall Aim

To improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and/or long-term conditions, their families and carers in Shropshire and its Borders

Specific Aims

- To enable people with disabilities to improve choice and control over their lives and/or assist independent living.
- To maximise financial wellbeing for people with disabilities.
- To treat everyone as individuals without prejudice and with empathy.
- To reduce discrimination and raise awareness of disability issues.
- In partnership with public, private and VCS agencies, engage proactively in the shaping and delivery of national disability policy at a local level.

Our aims and ethos remain constant, however we keep our activities and delivery methods under continuous review, working alongside our participants and other stakeholders to develop services.

Key Strengths

- We listen
- We treat everyone as an individual
- We are impartial and non-judgemental
- We spot and nurture potential
- We know that everyone can contribute
- We go the extra mile
- We look at situations holistically, finding solutions by working with trusted partners.

Activities

During the period covered by this report the activities delivered by A4U were:

- Independent confidential advice and information on benefits for people with any disability- claims and appeals, help with form filling, provided face to face or by telephone or video call, supported by tailored self-help information
- Provide holistic assessment of need and facilitate referrals into other specialist services
- Quality Marked Specialist casework on welfare benefits, disability and health issues from experienced caseworkers.
- Advice and independent advocacy to challenge a range of decisions including representing clients when necessary and supporting clients to self-advocate.

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- Keyworker support as part of multidisciplinary teams.
- We lead the provision of Shropshire Autism Hub services for adults in Shropshire. These include
 - management of the adults' diagnostic waiting list and first point of contact,
 - pre-screening for accessing diagnostic assessment,
 - pre and post diagnostic support, training and resources,
 - opportunities for social interaction and development of peer support.
- Access to training in relation to disability issues including Autism.
- Volunteering and employment opportunities.

All of the above activities have been undertaken with reference to the Charity Commission guidance on Public Benefit and are available to all people with disabilities and long-term medical conditions, their families, carers, and advocates. A4U operates within an equity, diversity and inclusion policy.

Flexibility in Working and delivery

Experiences during the pandemic heightened our awareness of simple measures to support both the health and wellbeing of our client group.

We have retained optional screens in some rooms to give added security for some clients who are still very anxious about attending public spaces. We continue small group work as this type of activity is much preferred by most of our autistic visitors who struggle with large or louder groups and avoids gathering large numbers of people in enclosed spaces particularly during the winter months.

We have continued hybrid working introduced during the pandemic, and provide remote support (by phone, text, zoom or Teams, messenger and socially distanced meetings outside) in addition to face-to-face appointments as needed.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ADVOCACY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We continue to provide our core information, advice and advocacy services via contracts with Shropshire Council, known as Advice, Advocacy and Welfare Benefits Shropshire with partners, Citizens Advice Shropshire, Age UK and Taking Part. The existing contract was extended to September 2024 and following a retender process in May 2024, has now been confirmed for a further 5 years.

As with previous funding for our core information, advice and advocacy service, this contract requires that additional funding will be sourced externally, and we continuously look for complementary funding options to manage the non-statutory elements of provision in addition to general fundraising activity on a small scale.

In view of this we completed a successful funding bid to Three Guineas Trust for a grant to support increasing free legal advice and representation for disabled people. We are increasingly seeing more complex situations requiring significant additional casework hours and people needing support to put their case forward, however this is not part of the funding provided by the local authority. It will also allow the recruitment of a further part time caseworker to increase our capacity.

Our development of Shropshire Autism Hub, and particularly our work with the diagnostic pathway for adults, coupled with our holistic approach, impacts on our advice and advocacy provision as many of the contacts we make through triage and pre-screening appointments also require some additional advice input.

We have also seen a dramatic increase in referrals during the year, reflecting national trends.

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We also have a small contract arrangement with Midland Partnership Foundation NHS Trust to provide monthly welfare benefit advice services to inpatients within the Redwoods Centre secure forensic wards. We had interactions with 18 patients during the last year.

All services are continuing to see increasing complexity and multiple issues arising for many clients.

During the year through our AAWB advice contract we supported 1,030 clients (847: 2023 +22%) involving one to one input, managing 1,368 different interventions (1,136 :2023 +20%) and achieved monetary gains for clients totalling £839,649 (£922,000: 2023 -9%).

Feedback examples from people accessing support:

"This service is invaluable to disabled people"

"Very friendly staff always there to help and explain things in plain English"

"Active ongoing pursuit and success after 2 refusals from DWP"

"L did a comprehensive job, very patient in a complicated case and won for me. It's life changing for me and my son."

SHROPSHIRE AUTISM HUB

The Hub Goals (developed with users and partners):

- To be a source of impartial and reliable information and advice about autism and services in Shropshire.
- To create an inclusive environment where individuals feel safe and welcomed.
- To offer support to any adult resident in Shropshire; pre-and post-diagnosis – clinical and non-clinical, and carers.
- To bring together services offering support, increasing accessibility and breaking down barriers.
- To provide opportunities for life enhancing development and the achievement of ambitions.
- To develop networking opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum, and the opportunity to develop new friendships.
- To encourage professional networks and promote awareness of the autism spectrum among services.
- To encourage individuals to work together as a group to ensure the Hub continues to grow and develop.

Shropshire Autism Hub leads the provision of autism specific services for adults, and their carers, in Shropshire. It is an umbrella for all our adult autism provision including access to the diagnostic pathway, in-house advice, support and guidance, as well as referrals to other providers.

The purpose of the Hub is to be the point of contact for people in Shropshire, both pre- and post-diagnosis, their families, carers and professionals. We provide support which encourages personal development, builds confidence, develops individual coping strategies and improves wellbeing and social interaction using a range of activities, in addition to providing a safety net of information, advice and advocacy provided by our casework team.

Our holistic approach means we look at the complete picture and facilitate access to a range of help and opportunities from our networks to manage complex situations, always with individual wellbeing at the core.

We have ensured access to both social care and health appointments completed online, including multi-disciplinary team meetings and diagnostic assessments, for individuals who have no access to a computer, tablet or smartphone and/or need support to self-advocate.

We continue to adapt the delivery of the Hub to meet its goals, the development of the service driven by autistic people themselves, and in response to feedback also from individuals who may struggle to access current provision. We also

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have experts by experience within our volunteer and staff teams and continuously build practical knowledge throughout the organisation.

We share information about other services focused on, and accessible for, neurodivergent individuals within Shropshire.

Shropshire Integrated Care Board

Funding from Shropshire Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board (ICB) for management of the Adult Autism Diagnostic waiting list has continued and been increased during the year to help develop further pre- and post-diagnostic support opportunities including potential development of outreach options.

We received ongoing referrals during the year via a dedicated NHS email from GP's and other health professionals, in addition to self-referrals directly to Shropshire Autism Hub

We have further developed the triage process in conjunction with the diagnostic team from Chester and Wirral Partnership Foundation Trust (CWP) and now complete an initial triage of all incoming referrals also working through the transferred list dating back to 2020.

We have worked very closely with their team to facilitate take up of assessments including supporting individuals to access the pathway, providing direct support to complete paperwork, manage appointments and access remote assessments.

Despite all efforts the referral rate continues to increase, now exceeding 40 per month with the number on the wait list exceeding 1,000 during the year. Commissioned assessments are not at a level to meet the current referral rate let alone respond to the backlog. We know this is a national problem and makes the provision of pre-diagnostic support all the more crucial for those who will experience a long wait.

We have built our provision to allow people to choose to access at different points and mix the types of activities that work for them. Many people have been referred by professionals who have told them they should consider an autism assessment, but they may know nothing about autism themselves.

The triage and pre-screening processes are geared to a needs assessment which allows us to provide information and resources appropriate for each individual, at a pace and in a format that they are able to process, together with referral or signposting to other services if they are more appropriate.

Our group sessions are both face to face and online, and offer educational information about autism, opportunities for discussion with peers and the chance to explore what autism is and means for them.

The Hub offers a person-centered service to facilitate individuals exploring their own experiences and profiles and consider coping strategies that work for them. Rarely is it the first solution that works for an individual, people need an opportunity to develop a 'toolbox' of strategies which meet their individual needs.

To support our broader delivery, we also access additional funding from donations and grants to ensure the full breadth of provision. This funding from health is in recognition of the need for preventative services and the value of appropriate preparation and support, but it is not currently a statutory requirement. We are pleased that ICB funding has enabled us to deliver this for some people, but we are not able to deliver it to everyone who would benefit, and we are not currently able to deliver for many more people with other disabilities and health conditions, or those with complex needs.

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Carers Support

AIMS (Autism, Involvement, Mental Health and Substances) Support group provide additional support for carers and family of those attending the Hub and we work closely with them to provide full family support whilst conscious of the independence of adults from parents. They also provide significant additional input from experts by experience to the overall development of our service including leading weekly educational sessions explaining and exploring autistic traits. These are tremendously helpful to those who have been referred for a diagnosis but know little about autism or what the diagnosis might mean.

We have received additional funding from the ICB to develop these sessions and specifically pilot group support for family and carers as part of ongoing delivery.

Feedback and evaluation

Reporting via our contract monitoring and to the Shropshire Autism Partnership Board and the ICB allows us to pass on comments and issues that are raised by users of our service and share our learning with commissioners and other stakeholders locally.

We are also encouraging and supporting Hub members to participate directly with service development within Shropshire as part of the commitment to co-production and ongoing development of the Shropshire Autism Strategy.

Feedback on the service has been overwhelmingly positive aside from the waiting times for people to access a diagnosis.

Comments /statements

"Thankyou Jenny and the Hub Team.

You listened to me when I was in a right old state.

You helped open doors and allowed me to discover who I am 😊

I can't thank you enough."

"I am strong. I have myself back. Thank you for all your help – still the only place I've felt get me and understand and I belong."

Further development this year

Interactive working with the Chester and Wirral Partnership diagnostic team has been a highlight this year.

We have increased our support for individuals accessing the pathway and enabled many who would not have been able to complete the process to obtain their diagnosis. We have seen CWP begin to provide face to face diagnoses in Louise House, something we have been working towards for several years.

We are saddened that they have decided to cease their contract due to the development of the all-age pathway covering Shropshire and Telford (they are an adult only service) but hope that we can continue to share best practice and network with others outside our region to continue to develop better services for Shropshire's neurodivergent population.

Undoubtedly the biggest challenge has been the increasing numbers of referrals, and we hope that an increase in commissioned assessments in the coming year will help to reduce the backlog for those most in need.

We are developing both our pre-and post-diagnostic support offers, together with short-term urgent issue-based advice and advocacy for those with immediate needs and continue to work with partners across our network to provide specialist appointment sessions via the Hub.

Regular Partners in provision include:

AIMS Carers Support

Shropshire Council Social Work teams

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STAR Housing Support
Autism West Midlands
Enable employment support
Midland Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust – Autism Forensic Service, IAPT, Community Mental Health provision
Shropshire Mental Health Support
West Mercia Police

Louise House Calm Café

We use the café area within Louise House as both a social space and a training venue.

In addition to our supported Autism Hub group sessions twice a week, we have continued to develop the cafe to create a Safe Space for people to come who feel isolated and alone to just feel comfortable or enable them to meet others in a welcoming and non-judgemental environment.

It also provides a drop in point for those who may be struggling, and we have identified people who felt unable to contact us directly to make an appointment but found support in the café from our Café manager/support worker who facilitated access to the casework team.

We now also serve staff and people attending NHS appointments in the building, many travelling from across Shropshire and needing refreshment before returning home, or while waiting for the effects of treatments to subside.

"The cafe is a lovely friendly place where I can talk to likeminded people and learn of their coping strategies and how we live our lives"

Staff and volunteer development

We are proud of the quality standards we have achieved; to maintain them, all staff and volunteers are trained and supported.

Our caseworker and team meetings provide opportunities for knowledge sharing as well as planning, but we also operate an "open door" policy for staff and volunteers to raise concerns or input ideas.

We continue to manage some homeworking flexibility for staff as needed and where possible for their role.

Staff share updates by email, provide feedback on file reviews and can arrange a separate one to one meeting for issues of particular importance.

All staff complete continuous professional development using both accredited training and regular online updates, reviewing research papers and participating in survey, engagement and other development activity. This is designed to improve accessibility and quality of delivery within our own service, but also share learning with other services and organisations to improve experiences for people with all disabilities.

Autism training for Hub staff is continuous as new research is completed, and understanding of neurodivergence is increased. We access updates from the NHS, National Autistic Society, Research Autism, Autistica and other accredited organisations. The comprehensive resource bank we are building is not only used internally and for clients but is also shared with other professionals.

Recruitment of volunteers continues at a pace that we are able to manage within our capacity to ensure the volunteering experience also meets their expectations. We particularly welcome volunteers with lived experience or professional expertise that informs our ongoing activities.

Many of our volunteers find us either as service users or having supported family members and want to continue to give something back to the organisation.

We are also developing Peer Support roles with those who have progressed and gained confidence to support others as a result of their experiences with the Autism Hub.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

We really do appreciate the time they give to us and the passion and insight they bring and value all their contributions to making A4U what it is.

We have strengthened our casework team this year and also recruited into administrative and support work roles to support organisational development. Applicants enquire about roles with A4U because they are attracted to our ethos and aims, and also our ability as a Disability Confident employer to support adjustments needed. We therefore very much value the significant number of experts by experience within the team.

Key achievements during the year

- Obtaining funding from Three Guineas Trust to extend our Welfare benefits service and increase availability of advice and representation to meet demand from disabled people who struggle to access specialist welfare rights provision. Our intended outcome is that people with hidden disabilities are enabled to access tailored advice at a pace and in a setting appropriate to their needs; this reduces anxiety, improves wellbeing and increases confidence to access future services.
This funding is for 3 years which will allow us to support those who need to challenge decisions and continue to appeal where there is merit in the case and provide additional support for process.
- We have continued to develop our Autism Hub Service, responding to the challenge of ever-increasing numbers of referrals, but continuing to champion a truly person-centred means of delivery.
- We also secured funding from Clothworkers Foundation contributing to the costs of purchasing a new Client Management System to replace our current database together with a range of spreadsheet-based tools. A fully operational and interactive system will help to increase time for client contact, transform our reporting processes, and enable us to more readily demonstrate our impact.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The renewal of our main contract for welfare benefits and advocacy from Shropshire Council and their ongoing in-kind support for premises continues to give security, and ongoing funding from the Integrated Care Board for the Autism Hub and adult diagnostic pathway for autism in Shropshire has enabled significant development of our service.

With the pressures on public funding, we know that we cannot provide the full service that our clients need within the capacity of the Local Authority and NHS funding, and we continue to apply for grants which match our organisational objectives, allowing us to provide services that are truly user led and enhance the basic statutory level of provision. This also helps to spread risk, increasing the variety of funding streams to avoid dependency. We have developed a Funding Strategy this year, scheduling opportunities throughout the year from organizations that fund work linked to our objects and ethos.

We do receive some donations from clients and their families wanting to give back and support a service that they have appreciated so much, and their responses and feedback are humbling.

Reserves Policy

The Board annually reviews the level of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations.

As a result of the continuation of reviewing risk within the organisation, the Board agreed that 4 months of operating costs is prudent as this would allow for an activity to continue should there be a loss of income and it would grant time to secure replacement income or wind down the activity with minimal impact on our vulnerable service users. For the Year ending

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

30 June 2024 four months cost would be £84,365, and our total free reserves, calculated as unrestricted reserves less designated funds and fixed assets, are £73,216 which is slightly below the target level.

A4U continue to take steps to secure funding from a wider variety of sources, to enable exploration of development and improvement of services, there is a designated Development Fund of £30,000 for succession planning.

A fit for purpose and up-to-date IT operating system is essential for delivery of the services. A £3,000 IT Replacement Fund has also been designated.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continuing delivery of support for the autism diagnostic pathway in Shropshire and the challenges of working with a new clinical team to develop a service that will continue to meet the needs of our Autism Hub clients, whilst increasing the numbers of people we are supporting and retaining our co-production and person-centred approach.
- We will continue our commitment to develop high quality standards of advice and advocacy and explore all possible options with partners and potential new funders to ensure continued provision of preventative services in Shropshire.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The trustees (who are also the directors of A4U for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 16th October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Mrs C Crackett - Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
A4U

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of A4U ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

C Moelwyn-Williams

C Moelwyn-Williams BSc FCA

TCA (Shrewsbury) LLP
Third Floor
21 St Mary's Street
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY1 1ED

Date: 8th January 2025

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		37,763	-	37,763	33,468
Charitable activities					
General		154,265	14,405	168,670	237,707
Other trading activities	2	9,275	-	9,275	5,008
Investment income	3	<u>3,357</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,357</u>	<u>1,716</u>
Total		<u>204,660</u>	<u>14,405</u>	<u>219,065</u>	<u>277,899</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
General		<u>217,758</u>	<u>7,818</u>	<u>225,576</u>	<u>220,715</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(13,098)	6,587	(6,511)	57,184
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		119,314	5,200	124,514	67,330
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>106,216</u>	<u>11,787</u>	<u>118,003</u>	<u>124,514</u>

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

The notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
30 JUNE 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks	8	150	-	150	110
Debtors	9	3,304	-	3,304	5,098
Cash at bank		<u>139,769</u>	<u>11,787</u>	<u>151,556</u>	<u>129,575</u>
		143,223	11,787	155,010	134,783
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	(37,007)	-	(37,007)	(10,269)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>106,216</u>	<u>11,787</u>	<u>118,003</u>	<u>124,514</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>106,216</u>	<u>11,787</u>	<u>118,003</u>	<u>124,514</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>106,216</u>	<u>11,787</u>	<u>118,003</u>	<u>124,514</u>
FUNDS	11				
Unrestricted funds				106,216	119,314
Restricted funds				<u>11,787</u>	<u>5,200</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>118,003</u>	<u>124,514</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 30 June 2024.

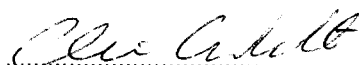
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 16 October 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



Mrs C Crackett - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charitable company has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows;
- the requirement of paragraph 3.17(d);
- the requirements of paragraphs 11.42, 11.44, 11.45, 11.47, 11.48(a)(iii), 11.48(a)(iv), 11.48(b) and 11.48(c);
- the requirements of paragraphs 12.26, 12.27, 12.29(a), 12.29(b) and 12.29A;
- the requirement of paragraph 33.7.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Stock

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks.

2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Café Income	<u>9,275</u>	<u>5,008</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>3,357</u>	<u>1,716</u>

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 30 June 2024 nor for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 30 June 2024 nor for the year ended 30 June 2023.

5. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	166,784	156,316
Social security costs	4,065	3,216
Other pension costs	<u>5,178</u>	<u>4,969</u>
	<u>176,027</u>	<u>164,501</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>
General		

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

6. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	33,468	-	33,468
Charitable activities			
General	135,227	102,480	237,707
Other trading activities	5,008	-	5,008
Investment income	<u>1,716</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,716</u>
Total	<u>175,419</u>	<u>102,480</u>	<u>277,899</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
General	<u>118,364</u>	<u>102,351</u>	<u>220,715</u>
NET INCOME	57,055	129	57,184
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>62,259</u>	<u>5,071</u>	<u>67,330</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>119,314</u>	<u>5,200</u>	<u>124,514</u>

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment £
COST	
At 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024	<u>5,892</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024	<u>5,892</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 30 June 2024	<u>-</u>
At 30 June 2023	<u>-</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

8. STOCKS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Stocks	<u>150</u>	<u>110</u>

9. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other debtors	3,304	3,390
Prepayments	<u>-</u>	<u>1,708</u>
	<u>3,304</u>	<u>5,098</u>

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	370	519
Social security and other taxes	1,201	1,081
Other creditors	912	2,972
Accruals and deferred income	<u>34,524</u>	<u>5,697</u>
	<u>37,007</u>	<u>10,269</u>

Deferred income includes income received during the period of £29,586 (2023: £667).

This includes a payment for drop in sessions running to August 2024 (£667 and 2023: £667) and conditional grant income received of £28,919, which will be recognised as the terms and conditions of the grant are met during the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.7.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.6.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	79,688	(13,098)	6,626	73,216
Designated fund - Staffing Reserve	30,626	-	(30,626)	-
Designated fund - IT Replacement	3,000	-	-	3,000
Designated fund - Development	<u>6,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
	119,314	(13,098)	-	106,216
Restricted funds				
Other Small Grants	2,700	(350)	-	2,350
WSP - Garden	2,500	-	-	2,500
Hub Session	-	3,755	-	3,755
Three Guineas	<u>-</u>	<u>3,182</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,182</u>
	<u>5,200</u>	<u>6,587</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,787</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>124,514</u>	<u>(6,511)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,003</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	204,660	(217,758)	(13,098)
Restricted funds			
Other Small Grants	-	(350)	(350)
Hub Session	4,765	(1,010)	3,755
Three Guineas	<u>9,640</u>	<u>(6,458)</u>	<u>3,182</u>
	<u>14,405</u>	<u>(7,818)</u>	<u>6,587</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>219,065</u></u>	<u><u>(225,576)</u></u>	<u><u>(6,511)</u></u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.7.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.6.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	62,259	57,055	(39,626)	79,688
Designated fund - Staffing Reserve	-	-	30,626	30,626
Designated fund - IT Replacement	-	-	3,000	3,000
Designated fund - Development	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>6,000</u>
	62,259	57,055	-	119,314
Restricted funds				
CCG	2,589	(2,589)	-	-
CCG Winter Monies	2,482	(2,482)	-	-
Other Small Grants	-	2,700	-	2,700
WSP - Garden	<u>-</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,500</u>
	<u>5,071</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,200</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>67,330</u></u>	<u><u>57,184</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>124,514</u></u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	175,419	(118,364)	57,055
Restricted funds			
BBO	48,280	(48,280)	-
CCG	49,000	(51,589)	(2,589)
CCG Winter Monies	-	(2,482)	(2,482)
Other Small Grants	2,700	-	2,700
WSP - Garden	2,500	-	2,500
	<u>102,480</u>	<u>(102,351)</u>	<u>129</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>277,899</u>	<u>(220,715)</u>	<u>57,184</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.7.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.6.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	62,259	43,957	(33,000)	73,216
Designated fund - IT Replacement	-	-	3,000	3,000
Designated fund - Development	-	-	30,000	30,000
	<u>62,259</u>	<u>43,957</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>106,216</u>
Restricted funds				
CCG	2,589	(2,589)	-	-
CCG Winter Monies	2,482	(2,482)	-	-
Other Small Grants	-	2,350	-	2,350
WSP - Garden	-	2,500	-	2,500
Hub Session	-	3,755	-	3,755
Three Guineas	-	3,182	-	3,182
	<u>5,071</u>	<u>6,716</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,787</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>67,330</u>	<u>50,673</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,003</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	380,079	(336,122)	43,957
Restricted funds			
BBO	48,280	(48,280)	-
CCG	49,000	(51,589)	(2,589)
CCG Winter Monies	-	(2,482)	(2,482)
Other Small Grants	2,700	(350)	2,350
WSP - Garden	2,500	-	2,500
Hub Session	4,765	(1,010)	3,755
Three Guineas	9,640	(6,458)	3,182
	<u>116,885</u>	<u>(110,169)</u>	<u>6,716</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>496,964</u>	<u>(446,291)</u>	<u>50,673</u>

Designated Funds

Staffing Reserves - This is the cost of redundancy payments in case of full or partial income loss, the value is the total cost of the redundancy liability re-calculated annually as at 30th June 2023.

IT Replacement - This is planned essential expenditure needed to maintain the operating capacity, to spend on our IT infrastructure to maintain fit for purpose, up-to-date equipment.

Development – This is costs incurred through the process of developing and improving our service to meet the clients' needs.

Restricted Funds

The CCG fund is a pilot project to provide enhanced pre-assessment support together with development of an indicative passport to enable improved access to support services, individuals and their families having a better understanding of autism and a means of articulating their needs to key services. In addition, a triage to provide young people 18-25 years old on the waiting list for autism assessment with support to reduce the negative effects of a long wait.

The CCG Winter Monies fund is to support individuals with ASD over Winter 2022.

The BBO fund relates to the funding received in advance of expenditure for our Building Better Opportunities project funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund.

The WSP - Garden fund is a grant to support with creating a legacy, in our case a sensory and disability friendly garden at Louise House, alongside volunteers from the WSP local office.

Autism Hub Sessions - Group activities including educational sessions explaining autism for those in the process of a diagnosis, and also available for families and carers, and social groups to assist with development of social and communication skills and to provide opportunities for meeting other autistic people and gaining peer support.

The Three Guineas Trust - This fund relates to restricted grant funding received from the Three Guineas Trust to increase the availability of advice and representation to meet demand from disabled people who struggle to access specialist welfare rights provision.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

12. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to the fund and amounted to £5,178 (2023: £4,969). Contributions totalling £912 (2023: £2,972) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date.

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 30 June 2024.