



(A company limited by guarantee)

## **Report and Financial Statements**

**Year Ended: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

Charity no: 1100722  
Company no: 04632497

## Autism Bedfordshire

## Autism Bedfordshire

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Pages</u></b>
<b>Legal and Administrative Information</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Report of the Management Committee</b>	<b>2 - 13</b>
<b>Independent Examiner's Report</b>	<b>14 - 16</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Statement of Cash Flows</b>	<b>19 - 20</b>
<b>Notes forming part of the financial statements</b>	<b>21 - 25</b>

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Legal and Administrative Information**

#### **Status**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2003 and registered as a charity on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2003.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. Under those Articles, the members of the Management Committee are elected at the A.G.M. to serve a period of 3 years, subject to ratification at each A.G.M. At each A.G.M. members may stand again.

#### **Management Committee 2021/2022**

The Members of the Management Committee are Trustees of the Charitable Company and Directors for the purposes of Company Law.

#### **The following Trustees held office during the year:**

- Jeff Bulled, Finance Director
- Philip Delafield
- Pat Guy
- Lauraine Montgomery, Chair
- Peter Scott, Secretary
- Pamela Wrest

#### **Charity Information**

##### **Registered Office and Operation Address:**

Suite B1, 1 Hammond Road, Elms Farm Industrial Estate, Bedford, MK41 0UD

**Telephone:** Tel: 01234 350704 (helpline) / Tel: 01234 214871 (general enquiries)

**Email:** enquiries@autismbeds.org

**Website:** www.autismbedfordshire.net

**Company Registration Number:** 04632497

**Charity Registration Number:** 1100722

##### **Senior Statutory Auditor**

David A. Cox BA F.C.C.A F.C.A of Cox & Co (Accountancy) Limited, The Granary, High Street, Turvey, Bedfordshire MK43 8DB

##### **Bankers**

Caf Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA.

Barclays Bank UK plc, 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2022**

**The Management Committee presents its Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

Autism Bedfordshire is an independent charity providing countywide support in a variety of ways including information, advice, emotional and practical support to individuals with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, their parents/carers, families, and associated professionals. The charity was founded in 1991 by a small group of parents of autistic children, to share information and support each other. Over the last 30 years, the charity has expanded and developed its services, earning a widespread reputation for being an excellent provider of quality specialist support, including Ofsted gradings of Good and Outstanding.

Autism Bedfordshire provides support, information and guidance via a telephone helpline, information packs, e-newsletters, website, Facebook, Twitter, and training courses and events. We work with the three local authorities in Bedfordshire to represent our members' views and to influence local policymaking and provision. Practical support and short breaks are provided through weekend family activity groups, evening youth groups, children's summer activity schemes, adult social groups, adult skills courses, and employment support. These services are co-ordinated by our office staff and run by specialist trained staff and volunteers. We additionally have two charity shops and a suite of autism training courses for parents/carers and practitioners.

#### **Finance**

The net incoming resources for the year were £1,277,435 (2021: £841,867). Of this £1,039,207 (2021: £637,332) was restricted to projects and £238,228 (2021: £204,535) was not restricted. The Trustee Board have officially designated £100,000 as necessary to our capital project and Supported Living, with the remaining £50,316 undesignated income adding to our reserves. The total undesignated reserves for year ending 31st March 2022 £192,355 (restricted £2,034 and unrestricted £190,321) a small increase from 2020-21: £142,039 (restricted £1,971 and unrestricted £140,068).

#### **Office and Service Staff**

We are tremendously proud of our team at Autism Bedfordshire, who have been innovative and worked tirelessly to keep the autistic community active during the ongoing pandemic and over the last year we have facilitated and led more services and sessions than ever, which has been an incredible local offer. During the year we had 41 office staff and 3 shop staff.

#### **Volunteers**

Across the charity, volunteers contributed nearly 30,000 hours of support and leadership over all services, shops and the Board of Trustees. This equates to 17 full time equivalent staff and would cost the charity in excess of £250,000 annually. It has

## Autism Bedfordshire

been another challenging year for our volunteers in different ways, as the pandemic persisted, they remained dedicated to see us push forward in our objectives.

We are ever indebted to Autism Bedfordshire's Board of Trustees who volunteer their time to set the vision and standards for the charity and ensure its safe management and solvency through crisis and opportunity. We are immensely grateful and proud of all our volunteers and appreciate every contribution each and everyone makes.

### **Paid Staff at Services**

We are fortunate to have such incredible staff working at our groups and we are extremely grateful to them for their level of care, enthusiasm and dedication to providing a safe, inspiring and fun time for the autistic children, young people and adults who attend. During the year we had 64 staff, equivalent to 9 full time staff.

### **Membership**

Autism Bedfordshire supported over 1,751 household memberships during the year and many more through our online information and guidance on our website and social media.

### **Information**

Our e-newsletters are sent to users of our services and other interested parties: 'Grapevine' about our Children's Services, 'The Orchard' for users of our Adults' Services and our Staff and Volunteers' e-newsletter. During the year 33,145 people accessed our website which included 29,118 new users. We also keep our members and staff informed through social media and by the end of the year we reached 1,892 users and had 1,551 page likes on our Facebook page and 1,617 followers on Twitter.

### **Helpline**

Our telephone helpline service continues to help support autistic adults, children and parents across Bedfordshire. In the previous year we saw a huge increase in helpline calls due to the pandemic with people being cut off from services and being isolated and we continued to see a high number of calls during this year with a total of 1,960 helpline calls being taken. Our telephone helpline is open 9 am–5 pm, Monday to Friday for information, advice, and guidance on all aspects of Autistic Spectrum Conditions and associated problems. We provide advice and support to autistic individuals, parents, carers, partners and professionals.

We have resources and information on

- Autism
- Learning and development
- Adult Services initial assessment
- Training and support
- Employment
- Social opportunities
- Diagnosis
- Benefits and welfare
- Housing
- Health/mental health
- Relationships

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Children's Services**

#### **L.O.A.F. (Loads of Autistic Fun)**

L.O.A.F. is a Saturday morning social activity and family support group for autistic children up to age 12 and their siblings and parents/carers. We deliver across the county: Bedford, Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Luton. At L.O.A.F. the children can enjoy a wide range of social, educational, physical and play activities with the support of our trained staff and volunteers while their parents can have a short break.

In 2021-22, we ran a total of 138 L.O.A.F. sessions which supported 75 families, comprising 82 autistic children and 29 siblings. The parents benefited from 1,017 hours of short breaks.

#### **Wanted Fun**

Our Wanted Fun evening youth groups provide social opportunities for young people aged 10-17 years with lower support needs with the opportunity to meet fortnightly during term time in the evenings at 6 locations across the county: Bedford, Kempston, Flitwick, Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Luton.

During 2021-22, we ran a total of 92 Wanted Fun sessions, supporting 131 autistic young people and the families enjoyed 1,790 hours of short breaks.

#### **Summer Activities**

Following the easing of government restrictions, we were able to run a full, in person, adapted programme of summer activities to support autistic children and young people and provide short breaks for their families. All staff received additional Covid-19 and PPE training and were provided with appropriate PPE equipment.

During the summer holidays three schemes ran in Bedford and four in Luton. Each scheme specifically designed to cater for the different needs, interests, ages and abilities of the children, totalling 31 days of schemes.

Our Children's Services Team, in consultation with the scheme leaders, put together a fun packed programme of activities for the children. These included on site visits, as well as trips including bowling, footgolf and the Orbital trampolining park. We supported 113 autistic children and their families enjoyed a total of 2,119 hours of short breaks.

#### **Family Farm Days**

We ran seven 1.5 hour sessions on the farm during the year, supporting 55 children, 52 siblings and 85 parents. The farm visits provide children and families with a place where they can interact with animals, spend time in nature and try activities tailored to their interests.

Our Farm Project creates positive experiences within a safe, nurturing environment and allows the whole family to enjoy the experience together.

#### **Additional Services**

Our additional services continued to be as popular as ever to children and young people. During the year we offered services from sporting, fun, social and creative

## Autism Bedfordshire

activities across the county including exclusive soft play sessions, exclusive swimming sessions, trampolining, tennis, rugby and art courses. The 50 additional activities ranged from 1 day to 6 weeks, and a total of 179 children and young people accessed 91 hours of activities.

### **Keyworker Pilot Project**

In July 2021 Autism Bedfordshire began delivering the Keyworker Pilot Project across Bedfordshire, part of a national initiative in response to the NHS long-term plan for children and young people (CYP) with learning disabilities, autism or both, who are inpatients in, or at risk of being admitted to, a mental health hospital. This service supports children and young people with the most complex needs and their families and carers to make sure families are fully involved in their plans, feel listened to and informed with personalised plans and the support they need at the right time, in a co-ordinated way. The Keyworker team make sure that local systems are responsive to fully meeting the young people's needs in a joined up way and where necessary, challenge these systems if they are failing to provide appropriate and timely support.

Key outcomes for children, young people and families within the service:

- to feel safe and happy
- to feel listened to and informed
- to feel involved in their plans, care and support
- to experience a reduction in stress and uncertainty and an increase in stability

Between July 21 – March 22 we coordinated support for 27 young people and their families and feel incredibly privileged to be delivering this vital service by our local NHS Trust. As the Keyworker Service develops, we hope to continue playing an integral part in its expansion.

## **Adults' Services**

### **Social Activity Groups**

Our Social Groups provide social opportunities to autistic adults who are looking to develop friendships within a supported and structured setting where individuals can learn social skills and gain greater self-esteem by developing an independent social life away from their family unit. Group members are encouraged and enabled to decide, plan, and organise social activities with the support of our experienced staff team.

Groups were held in person and online with 6 daytime and 9 evening groups meeting regularly. Sessions were supported by two members of staff and took place across Bedfordshire. Online groups were interest led and included a Quix group, LGBTQ+ group and a quiz group. Daytime groups visited Pride, restaurants, cinemas and took part in other leisure activities including tennis, rowing, dance and yoga.

A new daytime Social Group was launched in Milton Keynes with 28 attendees visiting various locations including Willen Lake and enjoying lunch at local restaurants such as Midsummer Tap. During the year we provided 8,496 hours of support and ran 387 social groups.



## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Adult Skill Development Courses and Workshops**

Adult Services has continued to deliver skills development courses and workshops, both online and in person. The flexibility to offer both virtual and face to face courses enabled us to remain accessible and adaptable to our members' needs. Courses ran for 6 weeks providing attendees with the opportunity to develop relationships and tools and topics included 'Understanding my Autism', 'Wellbeing and Mindfulness' and 'Positive Relationships'.

Our workshops remain one-off sessions online, allowing members to focus on a specific skill and to 'drop in ' from anywhere in Bedfordshire. During the year we extended our skills courses into Milton Keynes, piloted new services for autistic parents and carers and ran interest-based groups, such as Kickboxing. In total we delivered 117 skills sessions.

### **Employment Support**

Our Employment Support team worked with our members learning about their interests, skills and needs, to help identify opportunities and develop their autonomy and confidence in career decisions. The employment support training was delivered face to face in Luton, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, and online. During the year 17 autistic people were helped into sustainable paid employment and 12 people into volunteering or training, 6 of which were successfully accepted onto university courses.

In consultation with our members, we also developed our skills training programme to support them in overcoming the barriers to moving on in their careers. Focusing specifically on areas such as interview skills, customer service, and support whilst at work, 20 members benefitted from gaining real life experiences to practice and reinforce their learning.

### **'My Future' Transitions Support**

At the start of the year, we launched 'My Future', a new and exciting transition support service that was designed to help young autistic adults (aged 18-25) and their families to navigate the confusing world of adulthood. The service was split into 3 key areas which had been identified to us through feedback from our parents/carers and autistic individuals. It was made up of:

- Parent support workshops
- 1:1 support for autistic adults
- A summer programme to support young autistic adults transitioning into college or university.

We held the courses at 3 locations for a period of 9 weeks, supporting 15 young adults for 21 days. A total of 42 sessions were delivered equating to 180 hours of support.

### **Support Groups**

During the year, we increased the number of support group sessions in a response to the needs of our members. Female Voice was launched as a response to the number of autistic females coming through to our services, many of whom had received a late diagnosis, or were mis-diagnosed first, because of the unique presentation of autism in females. The group provided a safe space to share experiences, explore relevant

## Autism Bedfordshire

topics and resources and this year the group's support was increased to a monthly online group and two face to face social meet ups.

We also launched an online monthly Carer Support Group for our members who are caring for others, with a combination of resources, information and time to share experiences and concerns. Topics included 'What is a Carer' and 'Talking to Your GP'. 29 members attended Female Voice sessions and 16 members were supported through carer support sessions with 121 hours of support provided.

### **Here me, See me**

Our Hear Me, See Me campaign is an initiative in partnership with the NHS exploring the inequalities autistic adults face when accessing healthcare services. During the year, we have developed a new campaign department continuing to support healthcare services and held 20 empowering educational workshops for autistic adults and parents of autistic adults. 40 voices from autistic adults and parents of autistic adults were heard across the East of England. A webpage has been created containing resources to support and empower autistic adults.

An initial workshop was attended by 285 healthcare professionals, with the second workshop in January 'Adopting Sensory Friendly Practices' attracting over 300 attendees and 145 attending the third workshop in March 'Autism Advocacy & Communication'. There are plans to support healthcare services with creating more accommodating environments for autistic adults.

### **Benefits Support**

September 2021 saw the launch of our Benefits Support in answer to feedback from our members who had raised the lack of specific support available to meet their needs. In total 29 adults were supported, 41 appointments were attended, 95 helplines were answered and 154 hours of support were delivered.

### **Parent Support**

Our new Parent Support Group for autistic parents, provides support, resources and space to share mutual experiences of parenting. The initial 6 week skills course became a monthly online support group. An autumn social event was held for members, their partners and children. In total 13 autistic parents and their families supported.

### **Autism Hertfordshire**

In October 2021 the Integrated Health and Care Commissioning Team commissioned Autism Bedfordshire to deliver a new community support service in Hertfordshire, known as Autism Hertfordshire. The service delivers support, advice, and guidance to adults with autism and their carers, as well as offering support to adults both pre-and post-diagnosis through a range of interventions including group work, skills training and development and 1:1 support, in recognition that getting the right support at the right time is crucial to achieving better outcomes in the longer term.

The review and design of the new service was co-produced with hundreds of people with lived experience, carers and professionals across the county supporting over 100 people since its launch.

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **AUTISM TRAINING**

We offer a wide ranging training programme to develop understanding of autism across Bedfordshire and beyond. Courses included:

- Autism in the Classroom
- Autism & Behaviour
- Autism & Sensory Processing
- Autism & Demand Avoidance
- Autism, Women & Girls
- Autism & Mental Health

During the year we trained 1,142 delegates attending 69 courses and events. Delegates came from the public, private and voluntary sector and included parents/carers and practitioners from education and health services. 21 of these courses were pay per place and 48 were commissioned by organisations for their staff. 7 pieces of consultancy work were carried out and 11 sessions of key work were delivered. We also delivered an e-learning course for Central Bedfordshire Council.

81% of training took place online due to the pandemic but face to face delivery was offered when guidelines allowed our trainers to be onsite. Despite lacking the interactivity of face-to-face training, online delivery proved popular with delegates and attracted attendees who found it difficult to reach a physical training venue, with one delegate joining us from New Zealand.

With two new trainers the Training Team were able to deliver more courses. 98% of delegates rated our training as very good or excellent.

### **Parent Support, Conferences and Events**

#### **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**

Following months of delays caused by the pandemic, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October, Autism Bedfordshire's volunteers were presented with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). Nearly 100 of the charity's volunteers gathered at the Grove Theatre in Dunstable along with Deputy Lord Lieutenants, the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, other local dignitaries and charity funders to enjoy a cream tea before the presentation made by Her Majesty the Queen's representative the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Helen Nellis.

The QAVS is a unique UK national honour created by Her Majesty the Queen to recognise the outstanding contributions that groups of volunteers make to local communities. It has an equivalent status for voluntary groups as the MBE has for individuals.

The charity's volunteers, which includes the Board of Trustees, were also presented with a Queen's Award certificate and lapel pin badge. Following the presentation, attendees were treated to a presentation by guest speaker Jamie + Lion who gave a practical, entertaining and insightful talk on accessibility and autistic life.

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) 2021**

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October following the Queen's Award presentation, we held our AGM which was presented in person and via zoom to make the meeting accessible to all. This was attended by members, professionals, Autism Bedfordshire staff and trustees. Our guest speaker was Pete Wharmby who presented 'Autistic Masking and Burnout' via a large screen in the theatre and answered many questions from our membership.

### **Parent Training**

#### **Workshops**

Despite the pandemic we were able to offer a number of workshops delivered online. We ran 6 workshops on the 'First Steps to Supporting a Child with Autism Spectrum Conditions' for parents of newly diagnosed or undiagnosed children, and a further 8 autism training sessions covering Anxiety, Behaviour, Demand Avoidance, Sensory Processing and Women, Girls and Autism. We offered morning and evening sessions where possible to allow as many parents/carers as possible to benefit. We were also able to offer a trilogy of parent workshops on *Supporting Your Autistic Teenager*, which were delivered in person in June 2021 and March 2022. In total, 185 parents/carers benefited from attending the training sessions. All parents said they'd gained greater understanding about autism and that they'd learnt new skills/strategies to manage and cope with their child's autism.

#### **Conference**

Following the success of our 2020 online conference, we arranged a week-long online conference for parents and carers across Bedfordshire in November 2021. Talks and workshops were delivered by professionals, subject-specialist trainers and autistic adults. Topics included:

- Local Services Talks (Parent Carer Forums, Local Offers, SENDIASS)
- Supporting Social Communication in the Early Years
- Understanding the SEN Process (EHCPs)
- ASD Assessments
- Sleep Workshop
- Autism, Behaviour & Anxiety
- Toilet Training for Autistic Children
- Autism and Sensory Processing
- Eating Difficulties: A Psychoeducation Parent Group
- Supporting Social Communication in the School Aged Children

In total 124 parents and carers benefited (34 from Bedford Borough, 55 from Central Bedfordshire, 33 from Luton Borough, 1 from Northamptonshire, and 1 from Cambridgeshire).

### **Luton VCS Short Breaks Consortium**

Autism Bedfordshire acts as the Lead Body for the Consortium of Voluntary and Community Service short break providers for children and young people in Luton, with an Operations Manager overseeing the management and administration of the Consortium. The Consortium is funded by Luton's Community Investment Fund which

## Autism Bedfordshire

is managed by Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation as part of the Luton Airport Limited (LLAL) Community Investment Fund (now known as Luton Rising).

Following the disruption of the previous year owing to the pandemic, 2021/22 was a successful year for the Consortium with its members helping over 350 children and young people from Luton. 275 were children and young people (aged 0-25) with disabilities and 79 were siblings. Consortium members organised over 750 short break sessions which provided parents and carers in Luton with over 28,500 short break hours.

The 54 different clubs and activities provided included after school clubs, weekend clubs, holiday playschemes and outings. During the year there were again six members of the Consortium:

- Autism Bedfordshire
- Centre for Youth and Community Development (CYCD)
- CHUMS
- Families United Network (FUN)
- Friends of Bright Eyes (FOBE)
- Special Needs Out of School Club (SNOOSC)

### **Grants, Donations and Fundraising**

#### **Grants**

This year we raised £1,037,836 in restricted grants and £54,533 in unrestricted grants:

#### **Grants, Donations and Fundraising**

Unrestricted / Restricted	£
BBC Children in Need - small grants	8,721
BBC Children in Need - main grant	33,050
Henry Smith Charity	30,000
Harpur Trust Covid-19 Fund	20,800
Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation Stability Fund	20,000
Panacea Charitable Trust	15,000
Steel Charitable Trust	15,000
Leighton Linlade Town Council	829
Other grants and Service Level Agreements	948,969
<b>Total grants and Service Level Agreements</b>	<b>1,092,369</b>

We are grateful to the above Trusts and Foundations for their generous grant awards which have been critical to the continuation of our charitable activities.

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Donations and Fundraising**

As we recover from the initial impact of the pandemic to community and corporate fundraising, we have successfully raised and received through training, fundraising and donations, £80,118.

### **Future Plans and Strategy**

Whilst this year we became more experienced in delivering services in a pandemic, it was still met with challenges, requiring us to adapt and respond to the emerging and unmet needs of our autistic community. We have listened and learnt more about how a blended delivery model of online and in person can successfully meet the need and increase our offer. As we consolidate, we plan to use and grow this model to increase our reach across the age groups, across the spectrum and Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. We will hold some consultation events/questionnaires in 2022 and early 2023 with all stakeholders to inform our strategic plans and launch our Support at Home and Supported Living services.

#### **Future Plans 2022 - 2023:**

1. **Support at Home and Supported Living:** launch 2022-23
2. **Training:** increase the number of trainers, online offer and consultancy for parents and practitioners
3. **Funding:** increase income across a mixed funding model
4. **Local authority and Health partnerships:** secure for all services to keep pace with the need
5. **Quality and reach:** develop our quality standard and expertise and reach
6. **Staff and Volunteers:** increase retention, performance and satisfaction
7. **Opportunities:** remain agile to respond to new need/opportunities

The seniority at Autism Bedfordshire is highly driven and committed to the plans/vision that Autism Bedfordshire needs to grow in a sustainable way, so that we can meet the needs of our autistic community, now and in the future. We again remain secure in the knowledge that the social enterprise models highlighted will require detailed economic planning, based on their individual sets of business plans – the developments of these models will require careful risk management to mitigate risks to our existing core services.

Charity wide, we are privileged we have a substantial amount of background and proficiency to manage and progress Autism Bedfordshire. We have the data, understanding, adherence and initiative to cautiously and effectively manage the changes set out in our plans. Regular and rigorous reporting structures are in place monthly and specialised areas of finance, funding and operations quarterly led by Trustees.

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Reserves Policy**

Autism Bedfordshire adheres to the Charity Commission's guidelines and Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The reserves policy of the Management Committee of Autism Bedfordshire is to have available unrestricted reserves of 20% of the annual expenditure (£1,127,119) £190,321 (17%). Though this is slightly below target, this figure takes into consideration the full cost recovery of the charity shops and service delivery that is contractually fully funded and therefore carries significantly reduced financial liabilities that require the charity to carry reserves for. The Board of Trustees is confident that Autism Bedfordshire will have sufficient funds available to meet foreseeable demands.

### **Risk Management**

The Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team, recognise the charity's duties regarding the management of risk, and this is highlighted, reported on and discussed at monthly board meetings. Additionally, we have a financial risk audit committee who assess, identify and reduce the major risks to which the charity is vulnerable to. We are committed to updating our business continuity plans and strategic Risk Management Matrix (risk probability, area and impact) that we use to monitor and evaluate; and establish protocols to mollify and govern them, including the following areas:

- Mission/objectives
- Law and regulation
- Governance and management
- External, environmental and operational factors
- Human resources
- Technological
- Financial
- Funds and fundraising
- Fraud

### **Responsibilities of the Management Committee**

Our processes are driven by the committal to our constitution as a member led charity, whereby members elect the charity's Trustees (also referred to as the Board of Directors in company law) for up to twelve members. The Charity Commission guidance and our Constitution and Articles of Memorandum note that 50% of trustees should be directly affected by the condition of which the charity supports. Trustees, who hold office for three years, may also stand for re-election at Autism Bedfordshire's Annual General Meeting. Throughout the year the Board of Trustees may recruit for vacancies, using the Trustee Recruitment Toolkit, and appoint them. However, Trustees appointed through that process may only hold office until the next Annual General Meeting (A.G.M) through which they will be eligible for re-election – alternatively they will be appointed at a General Meeting of the Company. The Board of Trustees must assign the roles of Chair, Finance Director and Company Secretary.



## Autism Bedfordshire

Company law requires the Management Committee to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Management Committee should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The Management Committee is responsible for maintaining 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. The Management Committee is 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.

### **Members of the Management Committee**

Members of the Management Committee, who are directors for the purpose of company law and Trustees for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1. Only those that have passed their probationary period of six months, have a suitable DBS disclosure and two satisfactory references are listed. Members of the charitable company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 was six.

### **Public Benefit Statement**

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

### **Independent Examiner**

David. A. Cox BA F.C.C.A F.C.A of Cox & Co (Accountancy) Limited The Granary High Street Turvey, Beds MK43 8DB

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on its behalf by:

**Lauraine Montgomery**

**Chair, Autism Bedfordshire**

*Lainey Montgomery*

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022



# Autism Bedfordshire

## **Independent Auditors Report to the Trustees of Autism Bedfordshire**

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### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Autism Bedfordshire (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31st March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its result, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Autism Bedfordshire

### **Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed as auditors under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or

## Autism Bedfordshire

error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We designed and performed control and substantive testing with our responsibilities in respect to detecting irregularities in mind. We applied an approach of professional scepticism at all times. Although our audit is not a guarantee that no fraud or irregularities exist, we believe our approach has a reasonable expectation of detecting material irregularities, including fraud, should they exist.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### **Signed by**

*David Cox*

**David A. Cox BA F.C.C.A F.C.A**

For and on behalf of Cox & Co. (Accountancy) Limited  
Statutory Auditors  
Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006  
The Granary  
High Street  
Turvey  
Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK43 8DB

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

## Autism Bedfordshire

### Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure account)

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

		2022			2021		
	Notes	Unre- stricted £	Re- stricted £	Total £	Unre- stricted £	Re- stricted £	Total £
<b>Incoming resources</b>							
Donations and legacies							
		37,310	1,371	38,681	80,573	243	80,816
		6,210	-	6,210	1,750	-	1,750
		43,520	1,371	44,891	82,323	243	82,566
Other trading activities							
		35,227	-	35,227	13,744	-	13,744
	2	95,390	70,039	165,429	59,093	26,345	85,438
		130,617	70,039	200,656	72,837	26,345	99,182
Income from investments							
		101	-	101	113	-	113
Income from charitable activities							
	3	33,800	967,797	1,001,597	34,481	610,744	645,225
		26,634	-	26,634	12,997	-	12,997
		2,161	-	2,161	339	-	339
		1,395	-	1,395	1,445	-	1,445
		63,990	967,797	1,031,787	49,262	610,744	660,006
Total income							
		238,228	1,039,207	1,277,435	204,535	637,332	841,867
<b>Resources expended</b>							
Expenditure on raising funds							
		-	13,945	13,945	-	873	873
		258	9,483	9,741	3,866	4,808	8,674
		-	-	-	1,932	2,404	4,336
		-	-	-	1,932	2,404	4,336
	2	59,481	70,039	129,520	46,827	26,345	73,172
		59,739	93,467	153,206	54,557	36,834	91,391
Expenditure on charitable activities							
		-	305,930	305,930	5,265	282,924	288,189
		-	144,515	144,515	1,271	165,756	167,027
		-	11,071	11,071	113	11,367	11,480
		-	24,604	24,604	8,320	30,360	38,680
		-	351,430	351,430	383	29,863	30,246
		-	26,577	26,577	573	78,335	78,908
		-	76,242	76,242	-	-	-
		29,544	4,000	33,544	38,392	1,960	40,352
		29,544	944,369	973,913	54,317	600,565	654,882
Total expenditure							
	4	89,283	1,037,836	1,127,119	108,874	637,399	746,273
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds in the year							
		148,945	1,371	150,316	95,661	(67)	95,594
Transfers between funds							
		1,308	(1,308)	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>							
		150,253	63	150,316	95,661	(67)	95,594
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Total funds brought forward							
		234,438	1,971	236,409	138,777	2,038	140,815
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>							
	14	384,691	2,035	386,725	234,438	1,971	236,409

## Autism Bedfordshire

### Balance Sheet As at 31 March 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>	10	22,324	10,990
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	11	90,033	132,330
Cash at bank		996,021	499,711
		<u>1,086,054</u>	<u>632,041</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Deferred income	12	663,833	352,497
Other creditors and accruals	12	57,820	54,125
		<u>721,653</u>	<u>406,622</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		364,401	225,419
<b>Net assets</b>	13	<u>386,725</u>	<u>236,409</u>
<b>Reserves</b>			
Unrestricted funds		190,321	140,068
Designated Funds - Supported Living		194,370	94,370
Restricted funds		2,034	1,971
<b>Total funds</b>	14	<u>386,725</u>	<u>236,409</u>

The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for:

- (a) Ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) 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 special provisions of Part 15 of the companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and with Financial Reporting Standards FRS 102 (effective January 2015).

Approved by the Trustees on 7/11 / 2022 and signed on behalf by:

Lauraine Montgomery  
Chair, Autism Bedfordshire



## Autism Bedfordshire

### Statement of cash flows For the Year Ended 31st March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	513,056	338,372
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of fixed assets	(16,746)	(8,876)
Net cash used in investing activities:	(16,746)	(8,876)
Cash flows from financing activities	-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	496,310	329,496
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	499,711	170,215
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	996,021	499,711

### Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities For the Year Ended 31st March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income for the year	150,316	95,594
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	5,412	4,638
Decrease (Increase) in debtors	42,297	(23,464)
Increase in creditors	315,031	261,604
Net cash provided by operating activities	513,056	338,372

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents  
As at 31st March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash at bank and in hand	996,021	499,711

## Autism Bedfordshire

### Accounting policies

#### a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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<sup>st</sup> January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006..

#### b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The Management Committee have reviewed the forecasts for Autism Bedfordshire for the remainder of the 2022-23 financial year, and are content that the charitable company will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due. Accordingly, these accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

#### c) Voluntary income

Voluntary income received by way of donations and gifts is included in full in the statement of Financial Activities when receivable. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

#### d) Grants

Grants, including grants for the purchase of fixed assets, are recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year which they are receivable.

#### e) Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they incurred. Resources expended include attributable VAT, which cannot be recovered.

#### f) Allocation of support costs

Costs are allocated to the particular activity where the cost directly relates to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration on each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs on the central function, is apportioned according to the percentage of staff time and resources estimated to have been spent/attributed to each activity.

#### g) Tangible Fixed Assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, which in all cases is estimated at 5 years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500.

#### h) Unrestricted and Restricted Funds

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds. Restricted Funds are to be used for the specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

#### i) 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 amortised cost using the effective interest method. However, all the financial instruments are payable or receivable within one year and are therefore measured at the undiscounted amount of the cash expected to be paid or received.

#### j) Donations

The Charity benefits greatly from the involvement and dedicated support of its many volunteers, details of which are given in the annual report. In accordance with FRS 102 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the economic contribution of general volunteers is not recognised in the accounts

# Autism Bedfordshire

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (cont.)

## 2 - Charity Shop Activity

	2022	2021
Income		
Income generated through shop sales	72,770	6,122
Donations	1,305	257
Gift Aid	3	471
Grants	90,772	59,695
Other	579	18,893
Total Income	165,429	85,438
Expenditure		
Salaries and Overheads	129,520	73,172
Total Expenditure	129,520	73,172
Surplus / (Deficit)	35,909	12,266

## 3 - Grants and Contracts

	Unre- stricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Central Government/Local Authority Grants	18,233	325,408	343,641	246,763
Grant Making Trusts and Foundations	36,300	712,428	748,728	398,462
	54,533	1,037,836	1,092,369	645,225
Included in the Statement of Financial Activities:				
Charity Shop Grants	20,733	70,039	90,772	
Other Grants	33,800	967,797	1,001,597	645,225
	54,533	1,037,836	1,092,369	645,225

## 4 – Total resources expended

	Staff costs £	Direct costs £	Indirect costs £	Depreciation £	Total £
Fundraising, Consultation and Autism Awareness	-	248	9,493	-	9,741
Charity Shop	77,344	59	51,990	127	129,520
Children, Young People & Family Service	122,321	112,263	69,534	1,812	305,930
Adult Services	108,671	17,577	17,455	812	144,515
Adult Supported Living	-	20,644	3,960	-	24,604
Autism and Parent Training	20,702	848	3,286	180	25,016
New Projects	274,670	35,828	39,260	1,672	351,430
Support Activities (AIG)	19,104	-	7,261	212	26,577
Hertfordshire Services	64,927	3,672	7,186	457	76,242
Management and Administration	31,194	-	2,210	140	33,544
	718,933	191,139	211,635	5,412	1,127,119

Staff costs for the year include £687,740 (2021: £396,344) incurred as direct costs of providing services in line with the charity's objects

Management and Administration costs include £7,111 (2021: £23,993) for managing the Luton VCS Consortium of Short Break Providers



# Autism Bedfordshire

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (cont.)

## 5 – Summary analysis of expenditure and related income for charitable activities

	Children Young People & Fam- ily Services £	Adult Services & Supported Living £	Autism & Parent Training £	Hertfordshire Services £	Support Activities & New Projects £	Total £
Costs	(305,930)	(169,119)	(25,016)	(76,242)	(454,249)	(1,030,556)
Grants received (restricted)	294,080	185,807	25,347	77,083	455,519	1,037,836
Net cost funded from other income	(11,850)	16,688	331	841	1,270	7,280

## 6 – Net incoming resources for the year

	2022 £	2021 £
This is stated after charging:		
Independent Examiner's fees	0	5,662
Audit Fee	2,400	0
Depreciation	5,412	4,638

## 7 – Trustee remuneration and the cost of key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Charity are the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Adults' Services Director and the Children's Services Director. Their employee benefits total £178,978 (2021: £128,948)

## 8 – Staff Numbers

The average monthly headcount was 83 staff (2021: 62 Staff)

## 9 – Taxation

The Charitable company is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities

## Autism Bedfordshire

### 10 – Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
As 1st April 2021	57,774	57,774
Additions	16,746	16,746
Disposals	-	-
As at 31st March 2022	<u>74,520</u>	<u>74,520</u>
Depreciation		
As 1st April 2021	46,784	46,784
Charge for the year	5,412	5,412
Disposals	-	-
As at 31st March 2022	<u>52,196</u>	<u>52,196</u>
Net book value		
As at 31st March 2022	<u>22,324</u>	<u>22,324</u>
As 1st April 2021	<u>10,990</u>	<u>10,990</u>

### 11 – Debtors

	31.3.22	31.3.21
Accrued income receivable	24,222	33,976
Other debtors and prepayments	<u>65,811</u>	<u>98,354</u>
	<u>90,033</u>	<u>132,330</u>

### 12 – Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	31.3.22	31.3.21
Deferred Income	663,833	352,497
Other creditors and accruals	<u>61,056</u>	<u>54,125</u>
	<u>721,653</u>	<u>406,622</u>

The deferred income amount of £663,833 includes the following:

£57,911: 8 grants awarded for periods that overlap 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years and the remaining service delivery is scheduled for April 2022 - March 2023

£11,309: Prepayments for Autism Awareness Training courses where either the delivery date has either been postponed to after the 31st March 2022 or that the payment has been made prior to delivery date 01/04/22 - 31/03/23 to secure their place.

£3,236: represents session fees for LOAF and Wanted Fun spring and summer terms and deposits and payments for the July and August 2022 Summer Activity Schemes

£404,237: NHS / CCG Grants awarded for periods that overlap the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years and the remaining service delivery is scheduled from April 2022 - March 2023

£157,291: Represents grants restricted for supported living delayed project expenditure until 2022-23

The deferred income included in the balance sheet as at 31.03.21 was £352,497. Of this £195,206 has been included in the Charity's income for the year ending 31.03.22. The remaining income of £157,291 has been deferred for a further year for our supported living project.

## Autism Bedfordshire

**Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (cont.)**

### **13 – Analysis of net assets between funds**

	Fixed Assets	Cash	Other net assets	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted funds</b>				
Adult and Child Helplines	-	3,055	(3,055)	-
Summer Activities	-	29,055	(29,055)	-
LOAF	476	4,430	(4,305)	601
Wanted Fun	187	22,280	(21,100)	1,367
Skills 4 Success Project	-	555	(555)	-
Extended Services and Trips	-	500	(500)	-
Personalised Support	-	120,312	(120,312)	-
Adult Skills Project	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Adult Social Groups	-	9,471	(9,471)	-
My Futures Project	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Campaigns Project	-	70,556	(70,556)	-
Benefits Officer	-	2,500	(2,500)	-
Adult Employment Support	-	8,287	(8,222)	65
Beds Adult NHS Post Diagnostic	-	22,500	(22,500)	-
Hertfordshire Services	-	122,869	(122,869)	-
Adults Supported Living	-	227,291	(227,291)	-
Autism Awareness Training	-	11,309	(11,309)	-
<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>661,970</b>	<b>(660,600)</b>	<b>2,033</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General fund	21,661	139,683	28,978	190,322
Designated Supported Living	-	194,370		194,370
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>21,661</b>	<b>334,053</b>	<b>28,978</b>	<b>384,692</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>22,324</b>	<b>996,023</b>	<b>(631,622)</b>	<b>386,725</b>

## Autism Bedfordshire

### 14 – Movements in funds

	Balance at 01/04/2021	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Re- sources	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2022
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Adult and Child Helplines	-	26,968	(26,968)	-	-
Summer Activities	-	137,261	(137,261)	-	-
LOAF	1,024	79,548	(79,423)	(548)	601
Wanted Fun	327	65,809	(64,628)	(140)	1,368
Skills 4 Success Project	-	15,193	(15,193)	-	-
Extended Services and Trips	-	12,768	(12,768)	-	-
Personalised Support	-	113,389	(113,389)	-	-
Key Worker Project	-	156,802	(156,802)	-	-
Adult Skills Project	-	44,496	(44,496)	-	-
Adult Social Groups	-	54,697	(54,697)	-	-
My Futures Project	-	27,063	(27,063)	-	-
Campaigns Project	-	29,524	(29,524)	-	-
Benefits Officer	-	20,208	(20,208)	-	-
Adult Employment Support	-	46,882	(46,817)	-	65
Beds Adult NHS Post Diagnostic	-	7,526	(7,526)	-	-
Hertfordshire Services	-	77,083	(77,083)	-	-
Adults Supported Living	-	24,604	(24,604)	-	-
Parent Training	-	11,200	(11,200)	-	-
Autism Awareness Training	-	14,147	(14,147)	-	-
Charity Shop	-	70,039	(70,039)	-	-
Job Retention Scheme & Employment Allowance	620	4,000	(4,000)	(620)	-
<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	<b>1,971</b>	<b>1,039,207</b>	<b>(1,037,836)</b>	<b>(1,308)</b>	<b>2,034</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	140,068	238,229	(89,284)	(98,692)	190,321
Designated Supported Living	94,370	-	-	100,000	194,370
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>234,438</b>	<b>238,229</b>	<b>(89,284)</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>384,691</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>236,409</b>	<b>1,277,436</b>	<b>(1,127,120)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>386,725</b>

### 15 – Financial instruments

The financial instruments held by the charity are as follows

	31.03.22	31.03.21
	£	£
Debtors, other than prepayments	38,588	60,442
Cash at bank	996,021	499,711
Creditors and amounts due within one year	721,653	406,622