

ASTRO BRAIN TUMOUR FUND

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ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED

5TH APRIL 2021

Legal and Administrative Information

Registered Charity Number	1133561
Trustees	Mrs M Burton Mrs L Rickford Mr R Burton Ms A Scrutton Mrs T Jordan Mrs K. Ferry (to 23.04.2021) Mrs S Hopkins
Independent Examiner	Mr A Borland F.C.A. 75 Newnham Street Ely Cambs CB7 4PQ
Bankers	Barclays Bank
Correspondence address	15 Eastgate Holme Next the Sea Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 6LL

Annual Report
For the Year ended 5th April 2021

Astro Brain Tumour Fund has continued to raise money for research into low-grade tumours. These may sound benign but this slow-growing, progressive group of tumours cause inevitable life-changing and life-limiting physical and psychological symptoms and can cause death depending upon the area of the brain affected. They may also become higher grade (faster growing) over time.

Our Facebook Support Group page delivers a key part of our mission. It is a thriving and supportive platform with circa 470 brain tumour patients and their families sharing their experiences and advice. This helps to alleviate some of the concerns and feelings that often come with a brain tumour diagnosis and ongoing treatments and difficulties. Our page has an international reach with members not only from the UK, Ireland, and other European countries but also from Australia, the Americas and Africa. This global spread reflects the fact that our focus on low grade tumours support is uncommon and that there is a real need for it.

As a charity, we actively seek out ways to support research into gentler, less toxic ways of treating cancer. Whilst finding cures is our focus, we also want to ensure that any cure is bearable with the fewest side effects and leaves patients with the best possible quality of life. Without the fund-raising efforts of patients, their families, the trustees, and other supporters meeting the objectives of the charity would not be possible.

Research News

As well as receiving reports from the ongoing research that the charity is supporting, the trustees actively seek out information on new research into low grade brain tumours. The thrust of much research is into higher grade tumours so it can be hard to find research initiatives that purely fit our brief. Although the trustees are not scientists, we screen these to ensure that work we support is focussed on things that will move knowledge and/or treatments forward and have scientific rigour. One outcome that we look for is the intention to publish results of the research in accredited scientific journals as this necessitates strong scientific method in the way the research is organised, performed, recorded, and analysed.

Brain Tumour Research Centre of Excellence:

In previous financial years we invested funds into the Plymouth University Brain Tumour Research Centre of Excellence via the charity Brain Tumour Research (as that route attracted Government top up funding). During the pandemic there has been a delay in receiving research reports via BTR and in finalising the 'tiles' we had previously purchased with the investment made in March 2020. The trustees felt it was prudent to pause further investment, ring fenced for low grade brain tumours, until we have an updated understanding of the specifics of the current research plan and its progress. Research taking place in Plymouth includes:

□ New drugs for low-grade gliomas

Professor Ji-Liang Li's team are working towards a combination therapy of temozolomide plus drugs that target the tumour micro-environment in low-grade astrocytomas. For example, they are investigating drugs that affect the blood vessels that develop in the environment directly around the tumour, which can then carry nutrients in the blood to help the tumour grow.

□ **Low-grade to high-grade: Tumour genesis and transformation**

Dr Claudia Barros's team are using a brain tumour model in *Drosophila* fruit flies to study tumour-initiating cells. The team has identified genes that trigger the development of all grades of glioma brain tumours. By understanding how normal cells develop into tumour-initiating cells and then keep on fuelling those tumours, new treatments to target these cells can be developed.

New project for ABTF funding in 21/22

Molecular regulation of paediatric low-grade gliomas:

Denise Sheer, D.Phil. Professor of Human Genetics
Barts & The London School of Medicine & Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London.

The trustees have decided to support this new research (started 1st of July 2021) with a £60,000 investment over two years.

Low-grade gliomas are the most common brain tumours in children. While there have been improvements in treatment for these tumours recently, many children still suffer from long-term health problems caused by the side effects of treatment or by the tumours themselves. A better understanding of what controls the growth of these tumours is needed so that the outcome for patients can be improved. This laboratory recently identified molecules called RNA and proteins that are altered in children's low-grade gliomas. The major aim of this research programme is to determine which of these molecular changes play a role in the growth of these tumours and to understand how they do it to help the development of better treatments.

Paediatric low-grade gliomas (pLGGs) encompass histologically diverse tumours classified as WHO grades I and II. Despite their slow growth, patients with pLGGs can suffer a long progressive course with significant physical disability, and some patients unfortunately do not survive.

Pilocytic astrocytomas (WHO Grade I) account for the majority of pLGG cases. They are well-circumscribed tumours that can be cured by surgery if they are accessible. However, they occasionally arise in surgically inaccessible sites and may progress to more aggressive phenotypes, with the patients requiring chemotherapy and/or radiation. Glioneuronal tumours (WHO Grade I) most frequently affect children and adolescents but occasionally arise in adulthood. They are associated with significant morbidities as they are the most frequent cause of drug-resistant epilepsy in children.

The research programme seeks to define the crucial mechanisms downstream of aberrant MAPK/ERK signalling that regulate different cellular growth patterns observed in pLGG. Findings from the programme will significantly enhance the understanding of the fundamental molecular processes in these tumours and are directly relevant to optimising targeted therapies. This research project will complement and extend ongoing studies in the laboratory and build on its previous discoveries on epigenetic regulatory mechanisms in pLGG that were supported by the Astro Brain Tumour Fund.

Findings from the research programme will be transmitted to the scientific community through publication in leading scientific journals, presentations at scientific conferences, and seminars at the institution and other institutions. Professor Denise Sheer will ensure that publication in scientific journals is 'Open

Access', so that anyone can read it. All data will be made available in publicly available databases such as GEO to facilitate their use by the wider research community.

Attendance at Houses of Parliament and Conferences

We continue to support the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Brain Tumours but there have been no in person meetings in London in the period due to the pandemic. There has been a zoom meeting focussed on the drastic impacts the pandemic has had on charities and patients' treatments, well-being, and stress levels.

Fundraising and Donations

With much of the year impacted by Covid-19 lockdowns it was difficult to do many of the usual fundraising activities. The charity's supporters rose to the challenge with virtual challenges and other novel ways of raising funds. Events included 'Mary & Robbie's Christmas Star for Gemma', 'Tom Adams Walking Challenge for Brian Young', Linda's Birthday Fundraiser', 'Sarah Wardle's Norwich Virtual 10K Run for Gemma & Becky', 'Mark Blatherwick's charity football', 'Chloe's Fundraiser', 'Rod Barrett's 10 mile', and Julie Long had her head shaved, supporting her good friend Fraser Miller, on 1st March. This ingenuity is continuing with events such as Melissa Ireland doing a Land's End to John O'Groats virtual run/walk throughout 2021.

We were really pleased that despite the pandemic we were still able to go ahead with our largest fundraiser of the year, the walk at Holkham Hall on the 4th of October 2020. Risk assessments were done, and certain changes were made to ensure the volunteers on the day and those taking part were kept as safe as possible. No issues were reported to the trustees after the event which we were pleased about.

Thankfully the weather was quite a bit better than in the previous year and around 200 people plus lots of four legged friends took part in the walk. Some walkers were sponsored, and others made generous donations. Some of our faithful walkers were unable to attend but did "virtual Holkham" sponsored walks. Overall, almost £25,000 was raised pre-expenses, a record (circa £24,000 net of expenses)! Just over £22,230 of this was received during the year. We'd like to say a grateful thanks to everybody that helped us raise this amazing amount. 2021 will be the fifteenth year for this event with the walk scheduled for Sunday 26th September 2021.

We received £1,620 from supporters of the charity via regular standing orders. We also received several generous one-off donations totalling over £12,686 including an £8,000 legacy from the estate of James O'Brien. Interest on bank deposits and Gift Aid rebates from HMRC added a further £4,658.

In total the above comes to £57,255 which is an outstanding result in any year but especially in a year heavily impacted by the pandemic and against a background where many charities are reporting reductions in donations. The trustees would like to take this opportunity to say a very grateful thanks to all the community for all the donations and support over the past year.

Grant Funding



The Foyle Foundation was formed to implement the terms of the will of the late Christina Foyle. The foundation is an independent grant-making trust that distributes grants to UK charities. Since it became operational in November 2001, The Foundation has disbursed £115.1M in grants (up to 31st December 2020).

In the previous year our trustee Sam Hopkins worked on a successful application to the Foyle Foundation for a grant under the small grants scheme and we received £2,000 on the 25th of September 2019 towards the ongoing work of raising awareness and support for sufferers of low-grade brain tumours. This grant was shown as a restricted reserve in our financial statements.

The trustees are very thankful for this support from the Foyle Foundation and allocated the bulk of the grant to redesign our website www.astrofund.org.uk and change the underlying technology to make it more secure and robust (cost £1,530 all in the current year; £91 balance of the grant not yet utilised). The guiding light in this development was Sam who managed the long process and liaised with the external consultant to feed in inputs from the other trustees. Many initial contacts to our Facebook support page come through people finding our website first (patients, their families, others working in this field). The update enhances our image whilst protecting users, makes it easy for folk to find the information they need and the links to contact us. The trustees believe that it may encourage donations and were pleased that it was well received by our supporters when it went live in February 2021.

We can now update the website directly which supports future development of content and allows us to keep it current as to events, support, and research news. Without this grant, given that donations received are spent on research, this update would not be possible.

The previous year we used a small amount of the grant (£379) on banners, inserts for leaflets, ABTF t-shirts and web support to make us more visible.

Trustees' annual report
For the Year ended 5th April 2021

In accordance with statutory requirements and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (second edition – Oct 2019) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (FRS102), the Trustees submit their report for the year ended 5th April 2021. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting policies set out on page 12 and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice edition II applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland - October 2019.

Trustees

The trustees named on page 1 served throughout the financial year. Appointment of trustees is governed by the Trust Deed of the charity.

Kathleen Ferry joined the trustees of Astro Brain Tumour Fund in March 2019 after having lost her son to a brain tumour some years before. The trustees were sad to learn in April 2021 that Kath had passed away peacefully after a short illness, surrounded by her family. She was a dedicated and committed supporter of the brain tumour cause and was well known in the brain tumour community for her kindness, compassion, and for her wonderful sense of humour. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her, not least by the charity trustees.

Present Trustees Mary (Treasurer), Linda (Support Group Moderator and Secretary), Robbie, Angela, Teresa, and Sam have been committed to carrying on the invaluable work of the charity. Mary has been a trustee since the fund was registered in 2009, looks after the daily administration of the charity and with husband Robbie are very active fundraisers. Linda, as well as fundraising, is support co-ordinator and moderates the Facebook page. Teresa takes care of the financial accounts and observed the Brain Tumour Research quintennial review of the brain tumour research centre at Plymouth University, whilst Sam has focussed on the website project. Angela and Linda represent the charity at any All-Party Parliamentary Group meetings at Westminster and on related calls instigated by BTR.

Investment powers

The Trust Deed authorises the trustees to make and hold investments.

Constitution, Objects and Policies

The charity's constitution is embodied in the Trust Deed. The object of the charity is to raise funds for low grade glioma research. The work of the charity is for the public benefit seeking to improve scientific knowledge, treatments, outcomes, and support in this area. To ensure that this is at the forefront of what we do the trustees have due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission when exercising their responsibilities, for example when making funding decisions. The charity has appropriate policies in place to cover e.g., management of the Facebook support group, data protection and safeguarding, recognition of fund raisers/supporters etc. The charity has no employees and therefore no policies in relation to employment.

Developments, activities, and achievements

The trustees consider that the performance of the charity this year has been outstanding. In the charity sector in the UK there has been downward pressure on fund raising outcomes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, due to the efforts of our supporters, our income was £10,190 up on the previous year (£12,190 if you exclude

the benefit of the grant received from the prior year). We did not invest in research projects during the year as we were waiting upon certain reports from the centre at Plymouth and were in the process of identifying and evaluating new research opportunities. Going forward the trustees have decided to invest in research to be run by Professor Denise Sheer into molecular regulation of paediatric low-grade gliomas.

Support has been well received via our Facebook Support Group page. Members are actively interacting with each other and providing support both emotional and practical as new patients and their families seek knowledge from those who have already been through certain treatments/tests/processes

Financial review

The Fund derives its income from donations, fund-raising events run by the trustees and the charity's supporters, and interest on money held on deposit. Administrative expenses are small as the charity is run by volunteers and where possible the trustees seek sponsorship to cover administrative costs for larger events such as the Norfolk Family Walk. The trustees are very thankful that Adrian Flux Insurance Services has continued to support the walk in this way.

Risk management

The trustees review the major risks that the charity faces on a regular basis and are mindful of risks such as reputational risk or mandate related risks when discussing day to day business of the charity or when considering research funding possibilities. The trustees ensured that additional necessary covid-related risk issues were covered on the risk assessments that were completed to get the necessary clearances from the council and Holkham Hall for the annual walk. The trustees have also examined other operational risks faced by the Charity and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks. The trustees reserve policy is to aim for its resources to be distributed to suitable research projects as soon as practical to meet commitments made. Where specific grants have been received amounts may be held as restricted reserves until such time as the activity supported by the grant is completed. At the end of the financial year reserves were £83,375 (prior year £28,928) of which £91 (prior year £1,621) were restricted reserves. The trustees believe that maintaining reserves at current levels, combined with an annual review of the controls over key financial systems, will provide sufficient resources for the future.

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the report and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to Trustees in England and Wales requires Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ☐ Observe the methods and principles in the Charities' SORP second edition - Oct 2019 (FRS102);
- ☐ Select suitable accounting standards 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 departure disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- ☐ Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees on 23rd August 2021 and signed on their behalf.

Linda Rickford (Trustee)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Astro Brain Tumour Fund
Charity Number - 1133561

We report on the accounts of the Association for the year ended 5th April 2021, on pages 5-6.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to: -

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

Basis of independent examiner's report.

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

Independent examiner's statement.

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements: -

- ☐ to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- ☐ to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

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

A Borland F.C.A.
75 Newnham Street
Ely
Cambs CB7 4PQ

Dated 23rd August 2021

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5TH APRIL 2021

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<u>Incoming Resources: -</u>		
Donations and Grants	52,597	43,537
Gift Aid repayments	4,485	2,716
Interest Received	<u>173</u>	<u>812</u>
Total Income	<u>57,255</u>	<u>47,065</u>
<u>Expenditure: -</u>		
Research Funding	-	60,380
Fundraising	698	927
Restricted expenses (note 2)	1,530	379
Website hosting		360
300		
Insurance	185	196
Publicity	-	56
Printing, Postage and Stationery	-	83
Miscellaneous		<u>35</u>
<u>40</u>		
Total Expenditure	<u>2,808</u>	<u>62,361</u>
Net Incoming Resources	54,447	(15,296)
Fund Balances b/fwd	<u>28,928</u>	<u>44,224</u>
Fund Balances c/fwd	<u>£83,375</u>	<u>£28,928</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5TH APRIL 2021

	2021	2020
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Barclays Bank	73,375	18,928
Cambridge & Counties Bank	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>£83,375</u>	<u>£28,928</u>
<u>Funds</u>		
Fund Reserves	83,284	27,307
Restricted Reserves (note 2)	<u>91</u>	<u>1,621</u>
	<u>£83,375</u>	<u>£28,928</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 23rd August 2021 and signed on their behalf

Linda Rickford (Trustee)

Notes to the Accounts
For the Year ended 5th April 2021

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable UK accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland' (FRS 102). Additionally, they comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' second edition - Oct 2019 in all material aspects. The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The functional currency of the charity is Pounds Sterling because that is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the charity operates.

1.3 Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. There is no specific threat or relevance to ABTF from most government policies. The charity benefitted from a number of legacies and despite Covid-19 supporters found novel ways to raise significant funds. The trustees were thankful that the main annual fundraiser, the Holkham walk, could still go ahead and was well supported. These factors give the trustees some confidence that the charity can weather the continuing uncertainties around the pandemic. In addition, the charity has very small fixed overheads. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet funding obligations that will be tailored to fit resources and reserve policies. The charity does not take on funding commitments beyond the available reserves.

2 Restricted Reserves and Expenses

Last year a £2,000 grant was received from the Foyle Foundation to be utilised towards the ongoing work of raising awareness and support for sufferers of low-grade brain tumours. We used £1,530 on the upgrade of the website during the year and £379 of the grant last year on banners, inserts for leaflets, ABTF t-shirts and web support to make us more visible. £91 of the grant was unspent at the year end.