

Trustee's Annual Report & Accounts

2024-2025



 natural
ability

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Introduction from our Chair of Trustees and CEO



Bruce Howorth
Chair of Trustees

This has been another year of growth and development for Natural Ability. At the heart of the Charity is its beneficiaries and in all respects we have delivered on our commitment to provide support and services which are Respectful, Responsive and Unique.

The move to West Orchard House has continued to be transformative of the services we are able to offer and the range and number of beneficiaries we can support. During the year we have increased to offering day services in The Orchard on 4 days/week and expanded our Towards Independence Enabling service. Further development is already taking place this year with more planned.

ISL continues to be a focus for the organisation where we were able to support 15 individuals to live as independently as possible during the year. This service is recognised as being probably the best of its type in the area and is in high demand from parents and carers.

Day Farming and Handyperson Services have also continued to provide opportunities which are not available elsewhere and which supplement our other day services.

Financially it has been a strong year with 30% growth in income and we are going forward in a very healthy financial position.

None of this would be possible without the dedication, skill and compassion of the staff team and my thanks and that of all Trustees goes to them.

The past year has seen significant organisational developments designed to strengthen Natural Ability and enhance the support and experiences we provide. To increase our support infrastructure, we introduced an additional ISL Manager and created a new Service Development Manager role. Both positions have been instrumental in supporting our growth and expanding our capacity to improve processes, strengthen partnerships, widen our reach, and further develop our staff team.

Other key developments include a full redesign of our website and marketing materials, launch of a community sensory equipment library and making our sensory space available for local groups, including a parent and toddler group, introduction of an electronic medication administration recording system, expansion of The Orchard and commencement of enabling support for individuals. We have continued to work successfully in partnership with Social Care teams across both the Local Authority and NHS. We have also strengthened links within our wider community, collaborating with organisations such as the North East Ambulance Service, the Queen's Hall, the Royal British Legion and Northumberland National Park. In addition, we have worked closely with schools across the region to support transitions from children to adult services. All of these collaborations have created meaningful opportunities and valuable experiences for the people we support.

Most importantly, the people we support have enjoyed a full, varied and exciting year. Highlights have included European travel, seasonal celebrations such as Easter, Halloween and Christmas, and movie nights. They have also taken a leading role in developing the RCF (Respect, Choice, Friendship) blog on our website, gaining new digital skills in the process. We have supported individuals to embrace their passions—whether travel, acting or music—and to use their voices to influence the services and issues that matter to them.

It has certainly been a busy and rewarding year for Natural Ability, and we look forward with excitement to the opportunities the next year will bring.



Nicola Crawford
Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision

That people with learning disabilities lead fulfilling lives. Their potential is achieved and they are valued and contributing members of their community.

Our Mission

To improve the health, wellbeing and success of people with learning disabilities by providing respectful, responsive and unique services.

Our Values

INDEPENDENCE

We believe that every person should be able to live independent lives in whatever form that takes for them. We want every person we support to have choice, opportunities and aspirations, and we will work alongside them to achieve their potential.

CARING

We treat every person with kindness and patience. We treat people as individuals with dignity and respect. We promote equality and inclusion for all.

BESPOKE

We ensure our services are responsive to individuals. Our support is person centred and adapted to best meet the needs of each person, enabling and empowering them to strive towards their ambitions.

SAFE

We provide a safe environment for the people we support. We do not believe in limitations, believing that everyone has the potential for personal achievement, well beyond their own and other people's expectations. We are not risk averse - we work with individuals to manage the risk safely.

CHALLENGE

We do not accept that 'the way things are' is the way things necessarily have to be. We will challenge and lobby to change the way things are done to ensure that individuality is at the centre of all decisions made about a person. We will encourage individuals to have a voice.



Current Activities

1 Independent Supported Living (ISL)

Natural Ability continues to provide an ISL service across West Northumberland to support people to live independently in their own homes. The people who use our service are supported to have choice and control over all aspects of their lives. These choices can include where they live, who they live with and what activities and community engagement they choose to participate in to enrich their daily lives.

3 Towards Independence & Enabling

This service offers alternative education and training to post-16 year olds. Individuals can work towards building their knowledge and experience in a wide range of subjects with a focus on life skills, social skills, employability and working towards independence.

2 Day Services

DAY FARMING

Individuals using our Day Farming service can access a wide range of opportunities working outdoors in the North Pennines and surrounding areas. As well as providing the people who use our service with a sense of physical and psychological wellbeing, we provide rural training and work experience. The service works in partnership with the local farming community, therefore enabling our Day Farmers to work as part of a team to develop and support the work of farms, community gardens and other community activities.

HANDYPERSON SERVICE

This service provides people with learning disabilities a valuable employment opportunity working within their local community. The Handyperson team work alongside a skilled and experienced supervisor taking on jobs such as gardening, landscaping, fencing, painting and decorating. This service is growing rapidly, developing the skills of those involved whilst also building community links, community inclusion and strengthening supportive work placed opportunities for those perceived to be furthest from the labour market.

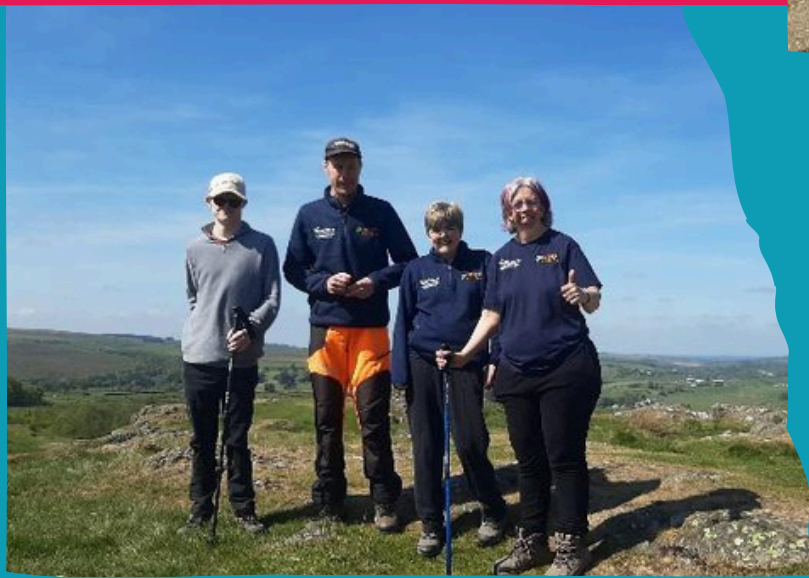
THE ORCHARD

The Orchard provides a predominantly indoor, fully accessible day service based in central Hexham, available to people with learning and other disabilities. The Orchard provides a welcoming environment where individuals can engage in a variety of activities, build skills, learn and participate in social activities. This service offers a comprehensive programme of modules tailored to the diverse interests and needs of participants, ensuring a broad and enriching experience.



Achievements & Performance

Once again, here at Natural Ability, our services have gone from strength to strength during the year ended 31 March 2025. The Orchard Day Service opened on a third weekday, and then a fourth, and both days have quickly filled with vibrant, enthusiastic attendees who bring their own vision and ideas to all that we do. Whilst not increasing the number of people supported, the ISL service did increase the number of support hours provided when several individuals required additional support throughout the year. The whole staff team worked tirelessly to provide a high quality service to all of the individuals we support. Day Farming, our initial service, continues to be well attended and enjoyed by all attendees.



Annual total income was £1,941,236 which was a more than 30% increase from the prior year, with net income of £111,442. Unrestricted funds at the year end were £478,599, an increase of £114,652 from the prior year.

Independent Supported Living

The ISL service has had another wonderful year with the people we support being encouraged to pursue their desired goals and activities. Social activities during the year have included film nights, Easter Bingo, Natural Ability's annual Beamish Museum trip, a competition-winning trip to see the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, several holidays around the UK and to Paris, Lanzarote and a tour of Eastern Europe!



We provided more than

91,000

hours of support in ISL over the year



Natural Ability's raised profile in the local area thanks to our occupation of West Orchard House has made recruitment of high-quality staff easier than ever before. The introduction of a new Service Development Manager role has supported the service with in-house training and dedicated development support.

"A loves coming to Natural Ability"

Day Farming

This service continues to be supported by grant funding and we are constantly working on making the service more sustainable. Over the year, Day Farming provided 16 people with 681 days of services in total.



The Gardening Group have been kept busy throughout the year with tasks such as clearing leaves, painting a wooden greenhouse, tidying the tool shed and laying an area of bark chippings, as well as the usual garden tasks. Their favourite part of the year, however, is always harvesting, cooking and eating their garden produce!



Day Farming provided

681

days of services to
attendees during the year



Day Farming



The Farming Group have been touring local dairy farms, helping with lambing, sheep shearing, dry stone walling, spreading manure, trench digging, fencing, weighing lambs, feeding animals, fixing machinery and much more! They especially enjoyed helping to set up the field for the Allendale Agricultural Show and going to see lambs being sold at the mart.



The walking group have been exploring all across the region, always encouraging and helping each other out. They have tried their hands at some map reading and orienteering and enjoyed a visit to the Washington Wetland Centre.

Our walking group walked more than

200

miles during the year



Handyperson Service

The Handyperson service has provided employment for 5 people with learning difficulties. The team have been working hard all year as usual with jobs in private gardens, community gardens, a community litterpick and grounds maintenance at Egger (UK) Ltd's Hexham site.



The Handyperson Service
worked more than

460

hours during the year

*"I would very
strongly recommend
Natural Ability"*

*"We are very lucky
to have them"*

They continue to work well as a team and complete all tasks to a high standard, even enjoying free ice creams from Allendale Forge Studios as a thank you for their work there!

The Orchard

The Orchard expanded to opening on a third and then a fourth day each week and is now open Monday to Thursday every week. The schedule continues to offer variety and is structured and designed around what attendees want to do and achieve. Learning topics have included pollution, Sherlock Holmes, Lego, tigers, the Olympics, aboriginal and indigenous art and chocolate to name a few. Investment in a minibus and a wheelchair-accessible van have made trips out possible and attendees have enjoyed many interesting and education visits.

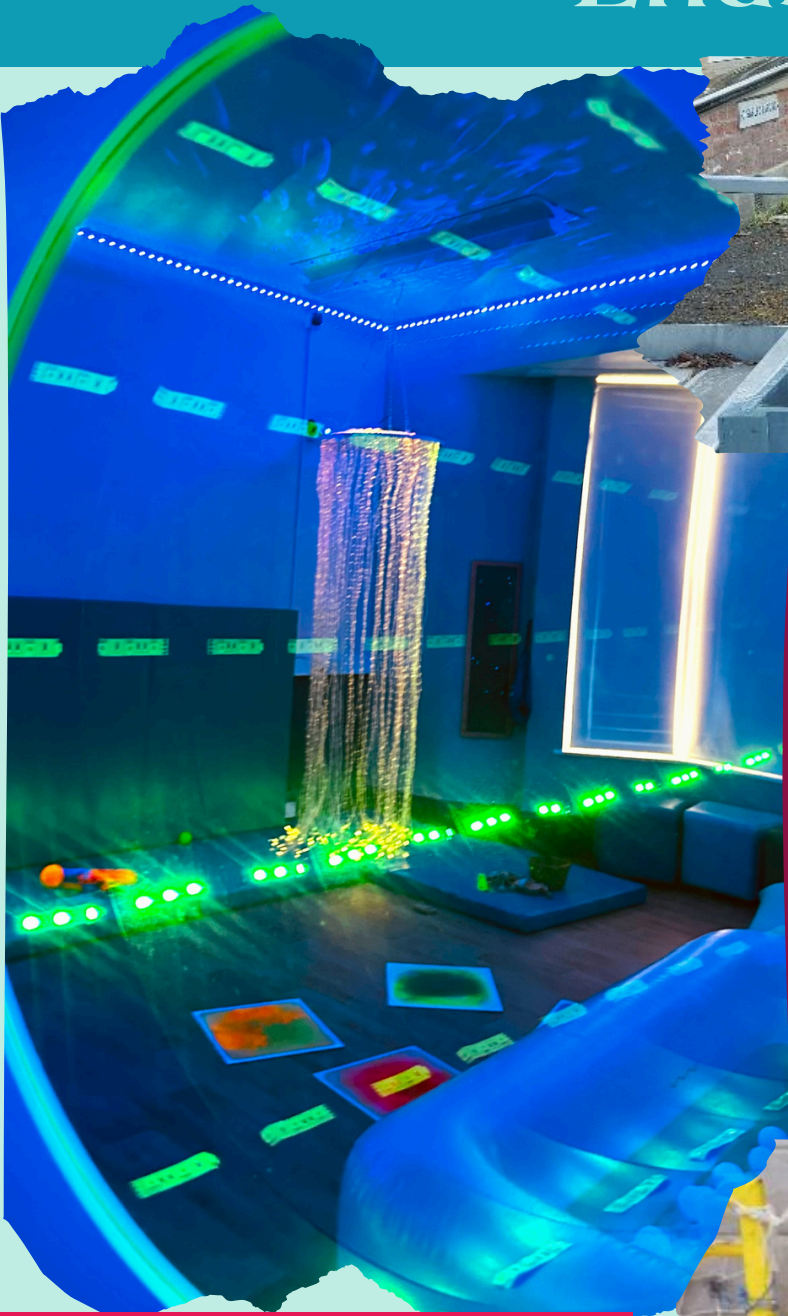


An accessible kitchen donated by Egger (UK) Ltd and Howdens Hexham has been a great asset and is very popular with attendees, as are the regular, relaxing yoga sessions held in the Sensory Room. The Orchard has also been invited to join a nature project in collaboration with the Northumberland National Park.

“She enjoys contributing to ideas and activities, and feels listened to”



Towards Independence Enabling



This specialist facility has allowed us to offer places in The Orchard to people who have higher needs and require a quiet space to retreat to at times during the day. There are also plans in place to create an additional sensory space within the Towards Independence Hub.

“Really excellent service, great staff. J has a really good life. Thank you.”

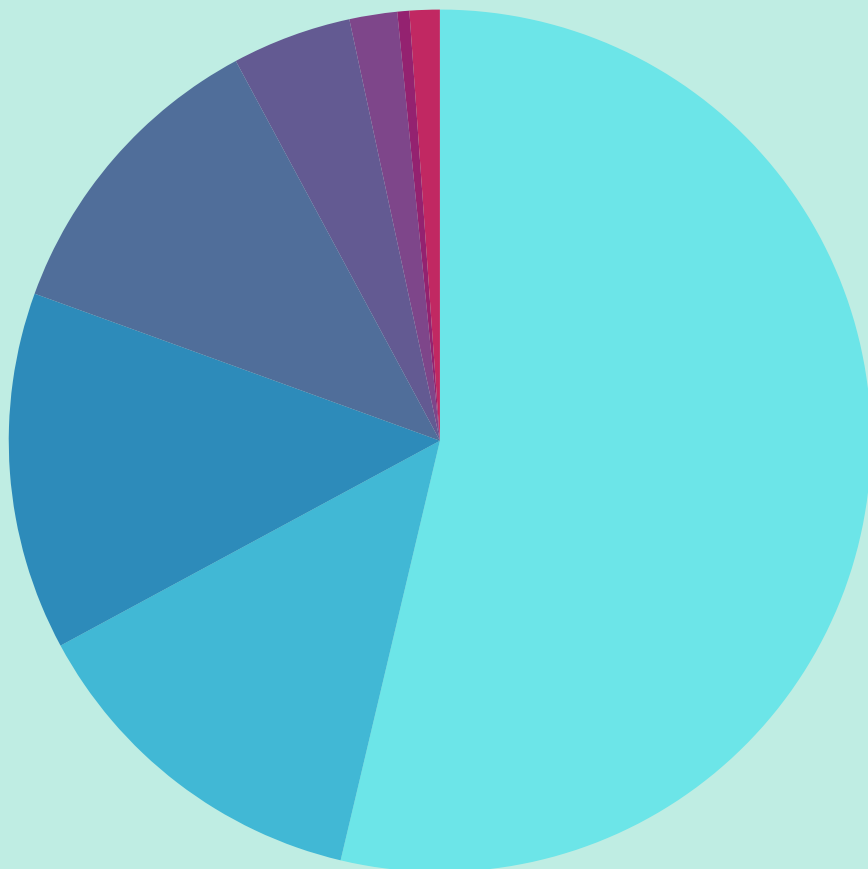


Grants, Donations & Fundraising

Grant income generated in the year was £110,472 (2024: £122,755) with the main funders being The Henry Smith Charity, The Ballinger Trust and the James Knott Charitable Trust.

Other donations were received in the amount of £1,260 (2024: £993) and fundraising in the amount of £121 (2024: £190). Natural Ability does not carry out dedicated fundraising activities. Funds raised during the year resulted from membership of the Northumberland Lottery scheme, online fundraising through Easyfundraising Ltd and a small fundraising event held on the charity's behalf.

- The Henry Smith Charity £60,000
- The Ballinger Trust £15,000
- James Knott Charitable Trust £15,000
- Egger (UK) Ltd £12,972
- The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust £5,000
- The Bruce Wake Charity £2,000
- David Solomons Charitable Trust £500
- Other Donations £1,260



Plans for the Future

The past year has been both productive and rewarding for Natural Ability. However, we recognise that a vibrant, person-centred organisation must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of the people it supports. Our focus remains on enhancing the quality, reach, and flexibility of our services so that we can empower more adults with learning disabilities to live fulfilling and independent lives.

Expanding Day Service Opportunities

We plan to extend operations at The Orchard to a fifth day each week, enabling us to engage with a greater number of attendees. In tandem with this expansion, we will review our current space and staffing structures to ensure our resources are used effectively. This will help us increase capacity, reduce waiting times, and ensure that no individual wishing to attend is turned away.

Introducing New Opportunities Through Community Engagement

Through our Community Engagement Project, our Service Development Manager will implement a new programme of activities held outside of core service hours. These will include themed sessions designed to promote learning, skill development, and social inclusion. Participation will be open to individuals who do not currently access Natural Ability services, broadening our reach within the community.

We will continue to promote opportunities for the people we support to have a meaningful voice in shaping the services and policies that affect their lives. Furthermore, we aim to strengthen partnerships with other organisations in the region to share expertise and collaborate on innovative projects that create new opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities.



Plans for the Future

Growing our Services

We are committed to expanding both our Independent Supported Living and Enabling Services, welcoming new individuals into the Natural Ability community. To better meet the diverse needs of the people we support, we will explore more flexible models of service delivery—for example, offering wrap-around support to accommodate individuals with working parents.

Developing our Spaces

We are fortunate to have extensive and picturesque grounds at West Orchard House, and we plan to develop these further to enhance accessibility and engagement. Our proposals include the creation of an accessible growing garden and a sensory garden to promote wellbeing, learning, and connection with nature.

In addition, we intend to convert our large garage into a fully functional space to support new initiatives and increase service capacity. Early design concepts for this and other areas of our centre include the addition of quiet areas, a personal care bathroom, a sensory snug, and enhanced group activity spaces.



Financial Review

The net income for the year was £111,442 (net income 2024: £50,761) as disclosed in the Statement of Financial Activities on page 15. Unrestricted funds at the year-end were £478,599 (2024: £363,947).

The principal source of income comprised earned income of £1,815,160 (2024: £1,357,942), with a further £111,853 (2024: £123,938) in grants, donations and fundraising.

The year ending 31 March 2025 saw an increase of 33.7% in earned income. The proportion of earned income for the year ending 31 March 2025 was 94% (2024: 91%).

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of the charity to seek to establish and maintain a reserves fund based on a business risk assessment to cover 6 months' core operating costs, redundancies, lease obligations and a contingency for unexpected expenses. The reserves policy figure deemed necessary at 31 March 2025 was £335,000. Unrestricted funds at the year-end were £478,599 (2024: £363,947) which means that the charity can meet the reserves figure as required by the policy.

There is £66,070 designated as tangible fixed assets and a designated buildings fund of £50,000. The remaining free reserves are held and added to on the basis that the charity plans to invest in capital buildings in the future and reserves will be required to form a deposit.

The Trustees review both the policy and the reserves position on a regular basis.

	As at 31 March 2025
Unrestricted Reserves	£478,599
Deduct: Tangible fixed assets Designated buildings fund	(£66,070) (50,000)
Free Reserves	£362,529
Reserves Policy requirements	(£335,000)
Available Free Reserves	£27,529

Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. Annual budgets are monitored on a monthly basis. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

Public Benefit

The trustees have had regards to the Charity Commission's guidance on their legal duty on public benefit, and are satisfied that the charitable company delivers public benefit. Due regard is paid to the guidance on public benefit whilst reviewing the charitable company's aim and objectives and also when planning future objects and deciding what new projects the charitable company should undertake.

Structure, Governance & Management

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and 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).

Governing document

Natural Ability is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its memorandum and articles of association dated 3 May 2010. It was registered with the Charity Commission on 30 June 2010.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees are directors for the purposes of company law and the members of the charity must become Trustees. The number of Trustees must not be less than three and not more than nine persons.

Induction and training of Trustees

The induction and training of Trustees is dealt with according to individual need. Trustees usually have prior professional or charity knowledge and experience.

Organisation

The charity is managed by the Trustees, who meet approximately four times a year. Three Trustees are needed for a quorum. The Trustees who have served during the year are set out on the Company and Charity Information page.

The Trustees are responsible for the leadership, strategic development and effectiveness of the charity. The Chief Executive Officer controls day to day operations, the delivery of services and the development of new business.

The Finance Manager is responsible for all finance functions and oversees facility management of Head Office. The Services Managers ensure that service delivery processes are effective, safe, high quality and meet regulatory requirements relating to the care and support for the people who use Natural Ability.

The Human Resources Advisor ensures that the organisation meets its legal responsibilities relating to employment law, safer recruitment principles are adhered to and a positive working culture is provided for all employees.

Risk Management

A full set of policies on health and safety, financial management, staffing, information security and customer liaison have been established and are reviewed as required and at least every 3 years.

Safety

The charity has a focus on the safety and security of its entire workforce and customers, particularly as a number of them are vulnerable people. With this in mind:

- All staff are trained first aiders;
- Head Office staff are trained Mental Health first aiders;
- All staff must obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, are encouraged to join the Update Service and are governed by the charity's policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

The charity's Health and Safety Officer is Nicola Crawford (CEO).

The charity's employer's liability, public and products liability, professional indemnity, Trustees and Director's indemnity and contents insurance policy is provided by Towergate Insurance.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Natural Ability for the purpose 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).

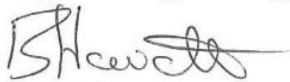
Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

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

This report was approved by the Trustees on 15th December 2025.



Mr. B. N. Howorth
Chair of Trustees



Company & Charity Information

Trustees

Bruce N. Howorth (Chair)
Robert E. H. Philipson
Mike J. Quinn
Moya Holmes
Daisy Gardener
Calum Nicholson (appointed 11th June 2025)

Registered Company Number
6959710

Charity Number
1136665

Key Management Personnel

Nicola Crawford	Chief Executive and Company Secretary
Kathy Lowe	Finance Manager
Emily Winter	HR Advisor (appointed 28 th May 2024)
Fiona Carlile	Senior ISL Manager
Suzanne Keen	Day Services Manager

Registered Office

West Orchard House
Allendale Road
Hexham
NE46 2DE

Accountants

Robson Laidler Accountants Ltd
Fernwood House, Fernwood Road
Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 1TJ

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
Nine Brindleyplace
Birmingham
B1 2HB



Independent Auditors' Report

to the members of Natural Ability for the year ended 31 March 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Natural Ability (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity 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 charity'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.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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. 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 course of 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.

Independent Auditors' Report

Cont.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose 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 charity'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.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 error, and to issue an auditor's report 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.

The risk of material misstatement due to error or fraud has been assessed in conjunction with how internal controls may mitigate any such risk. These controls are reviewed as part of the audit by performing systems walkthroughs to ensure they are operating effectively. Analytical review and substantive testing is also performed on all material balances and therefore any instances of non-compliance should be identified or considered as insignificant. In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team;

Independent Auditors' Report

Cont.

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the industry and sector, including the legal and regulatory framework, in which the charity operates and how the charity complies with that legal and regulatory framework
- inquired with management and those charged with governance about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud
- discussed with management and those charged with governance any non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessments of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

The risk of management override of controls was also considered an area of potential misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included testing of manual journal entries and other adjustments and evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Nicholas Cunningham MSc BSc FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Robson Laidler Accountants Limited, Statutory Auditor

Fernwood House

Fernwood Road

Jesmond

Newcastle upon Tyne

Tyne and Wear

NE2 1TJ

England

17-12-2025

Statement of Financial Activities

(including Income and Expenditure Account)

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Grants and donations	4	29,232	82,500	111,732	123,748
Fundraising		121	-	121	190
Charitable activities	5	1,815,160	-	1,815,160	1,357,942
Other income	6	9,114	-	9,114	6,614
Interest receivable		5,109	-	5,109	2,665
Total income		1,858,736	82,500	1,941,236	1,491,159
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		27,925	-	27,925	26,257
Charitable activities		1,716,159	85,710	1,801,869	1,414,141
Total expenditure	7	1,744,084	85,710	1,829,794	1,440,398
Net income for the year		114,652	(3,210)	111,442	50,761
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		363,947	25,016	388,963	338,202
Total funds carried forward		478,599	21,806	500,405	338,963

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	66,070	35,733
Current assets			
Debtors	12	79,163	120,292
Cash at bank	13	438,178	308,948
Cash in hand		1,056	1,127
		<u>518,397</u>	<u>430,367</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(84,062)	(77,137)
Net current assets		<u>434,335</u>	<u>353,230</u>
Net assets		<u>500,405</u>	<u>388,963</u>
Charity funds:			
Unrestricted funds	17	478,599	363,947
Restricted funds	18	21,806	25,016
Total		<u>500,405</u>	<u>388,963</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on15th December..... 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Mr. B. N. Howorth
Chair of Trustees

Company registration number 6959710 (England and Wales)

Cash Flow Statement

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes		
		2025	2024
		£	£
Cash generated from operations			
Surplus on ordinary activities		111,442	50,761
Reconciliation to cash generated from operations:			
Depreciation		16,559	10,317
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors		6,925	12,915
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors		41,129	(21,749)
Purchase of tangible assets		(46,896)	(18,194)
Proceeds from sale of tangible assets		5,250	-
Profit on disposal of tangible assets		(5,250)	-
Increase in cash and cash equivalents		129,159	34,050
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward:			
Cash at bank and in hand brought forward as at 1 st April 2024		310,075	276,025
Net movement in cash		129,159	34,050
Total funds carried forward:			
Cash at bank and in hand carried forward at 31 st March 2025		439,234	310,075

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and, as such, no shares are issued. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

2. Accounting policies

a) Basis of accounting

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) issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice.

Natural Ability meets the definition of a public benefit under FRS 102. The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

b) Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

c) Fund accounting – unrestricted and restricted funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity without further specified purpose.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions given by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

d) Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and any recognised impairment costs.

Depreciation is charged at rates calculated to write down the cost of assets (excluding freehold land) over their estimated useful lives at the following rates:

Plant, equipment & furniture	15% reducing balance
I.T equipment	25% straight line
Vehicles	15% straight line

The gain or loss arising on disposal or retirement of an asset is determined as the difference between the proceeds of sale and the carrying amount of the asset and is recognised in income or expenditure.

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

e) Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received. Income from charitable activities received to deliver services is recognised within the relevant period. Interest receivable on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity, this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank. Donated services and facilities are included where the amounts concerned can be quantified.

f) Deferred income

In the past, grant income received was held as deferred income and released to the income and expenditure account in the period in which the related expense was incurred. During 2024/25 no income was held as deferred income and none was released to the income and expenditure account.

g) Expenditure recognition

Expenditure is recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis, inclusive of any VAT which cannot be recovered. Expenditure on raising funds comprises the costs incurred in raising income from grants and donations. Charitable expenditure comprises all costs of activities in furtherance of the objects of the charity. Governance costs represents costs incurred in connection with the administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements. Support costs relating to more than one activity are allocated on the basis of staff time spent.

h) Cash at bank

Cash at bank consists of a Unity Trust Bank plc current account and a Unity Trust Bank plc instant access savings account.

i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

j) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount.

k) Financial instruments

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

l) Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution plan for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable. The charity contribution in the year is disclosed in note 16. The pension scheme is managed by Nest Corporation. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions of employees' contributions.

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

3. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Income from:			
Grants and donations	12,284	111,464	123,748
Fundraising	190	-	190
Charitable activities	1,357,942	-	1,357,942
Other income	6,614	-	6,614
Interest receivable	2,665	-	2,665
Total income	1,379,695	111,464	1,491,159
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	26,257	-	26,257
Charitable activities	1,324,600	89,541	1,414,141
Total expenditure	1,350,857	89,541	1,440,398
Net income for the year	28,838	21,923	50,761
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	335,109	3,093	338,202
Total funds carried forward	363,947	25,016	388,963

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

4. Grants and donations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	-	-	-	15,000
CLA Charitable Trust	-	-	-	4,000
David Solomons Charitable Trust	-	500	500	-
Egger UK Ltd	12,972	-	12,972	10,000
Hadrian Trust	-	-	-	1,000
The Ballinger Trust	15,000	-	15,000	-
The Bruce Wake Charity	-	2,000	2,000	-
The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,000
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	-	-	21,500
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-
The Hedley Foundation	-	-	-	3,000
The Henry Smith Charity	-	60,000	60,000	60,000
The Rothley Trust	-	-	-	1,250
The Screwfix Foundation	-	-	-	4,714
The Sir James Knott Charitable Trust	-	15,000	15,000	-
Vercelli Restaurant LLP	-	-	-	1,291
Other Donations	1,260	-	1,260	993
	<u>29,232</u>	<u>82,500</u>	<u>111,732</u>	<u>123,748</u>

5. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Day Farming Fees	55,273	-	55,273	50,346
Handyperson Service	5,477	-	5,477	4,705
Independent Supported Living Programmes	1,670,519	-	1,670,519	1,284,917
Other	2,498	-	2,498	100
The Orchard Fees	80,806	-	80,806	17,507
Towards Independence Enabling	587	-	587	367
	<u>1,815,160</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,815,160</u>	<u>1,357,942</u>

6. Other Income

	2025 £	2024 £
Profit on disposal of tangible asset	5,250	-
Settlement of insurance claim	3,864	6,614
	<u>9,114</u>	<u>6,614</u>

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

7. Total expenditure

	Raising Funds	Charitable activities	Governance costs	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Direct costs					
Bad Debt	-	210	-	210	44
Day Farming costs	-	1,970	-	1,970	2,031
Depreciation	-	16,559	-	16,559	10,317
Fundraising costs	-	-	-	-	-
Handyperson costs	-	111	-	111	-
Independent Supported Living costs	-	7,506	-	7,506	7,136
Staff costs	-	1,456,459	-	1,456,459	1,121,177
The Orchard Costs	-	5,673	-	5,673	10,469
Vehicle costs	-	13,848	-	13,848	7,516
Volunteer costs	-	-	-	-	6
Allocated support costs					
Staff costs	23,795	158,551	10,519	192,865	174,727
Office costs	4,130	117,813	4,130	126,073	100,975
Professional fees	-	-	8,520	8,520	6,000
	<u>27,925</u>	<u>1,778,700</u>	<u>23,169</u>	<u>1,829,794</u>	<u>1,440,398</u>

8. Net incoming/(outgoing) reserves

Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year include:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Depreciation	16,559	10,317
Auditors' remuneration	<u>8,520</u>	<u>6,000</u>

9. Analysis of staff costs, and the cost of key management personnel

The aggregate staff costs were:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,451,817	1,176,024
Social security costs	129,405	97,339
Pension costs	<u>68,102</u>	<u>22,541</u>
	<u>1,649,324</u>	<u>1,295,904</u>

The charity considers its key management personnel comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, the Finance Manager, the HR Advisor, the Senior ISL Manager and the Day Services Manager. The total employment benefits of the key management personnel were £224,266 (2024: £221,124).

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1

The average number of staff during the year was 66 (2024: 54).

10. Trustees' remuneration and related party transactions

The trustees did not receive any emoluments during the year and were not paid or reimbursed for any expenses.

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Motor Vehicles	I.T. equipment	Plant, equipment & furniture	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
At 1 April 2024	55,050	31,030	23,830	109,910
Additions	35,599	3,020	8,277	46,896
Disposals	(31,015)	-	-	(31,015)
At 31 March 2025	59,634	34,050	32,107	125,791
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2024	41,830	24,475	7,872	74,177
Charge for the year	8,945	3,978	3,636	16,559
Disposals	(31,015)	-	-	(31,015)
At 31 March 2025	19,760	28,453	11,508	59,721
Net book value				
At 31 March 2025	39,874	5,597	20,599	66,070
At 31 March 2024	13,220	6,555	15,958	35,733

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	39,126	116,404
Prepayments and accrued income	40,037	3,888
	79,163	120,292

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

13. Cash at Bank

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unity Trust Bank Current Account	229,731	205,609
Unity Trust Bank Savings Account	208,447	103,339
	<u>438,178</u>	<u>308,948</u>

14. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	489	1,208
Other taxation and social security	42,611	38,452
Accruals and deferred income	40,962	37,477
	<u>84,062</u>	<u>77,137</u>

15. Commitments under operating leases

At 31 March 2025 future minimum rentals payable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	996	2,263
In two to five years	2,822	5,853
	<u>3,818</u>	<u>8,116</u>

16. Pension

Defined contribution pension schemes

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £68,102 (2024 - £22,541).

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

17. Unrestricted funds

Year ended 31 March 2025

	At 1- Apr-24 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	At 31- Mar-25 £
Unrestricted funds	326,947	1,858,736	(1,738,744)	(18,340)	428,599
Designated funds					
Buildings Fund	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Replacement vehicle(s)	37,000	-	(5,340)	(31,660)	-
	363,947	1,858,736	(1,744,084)	-	478,599

Year ended 31 March 2024

	At 1- Apr-23 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	At 31- Mar-24 £
Unrestricted funds	335,109	1,379,695	(1,350,857)	(37,000)	326,947
Designated funds	-	-	-	37,000	37,000
Replacement vehicle(s)					
	335,109	1,379,695	(1,350,857)	-	363,947

Designated funds

Replacement vehicle(s) – relates to funds set aside to replace vehicles.

Buildings fund – relates to funds set aside to purchase a building.

18. Restricted income funds

Year ended 31 March 2025

	At 1- Apr-24 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfer £	At 31- Mar-25 £
Baily Thomas Charitable Foundation	15,000	-	(13,850)	-	1,150
Boshier-Hinton Foundation	1,910	-	(1,209)	-	701
David Solomons Charitable Trust	-	500	(500)	-	-
The Bruce Wake Charity	-	2,000	-	-	2,000
The Clothworkers Foundation	7,582	-	(4,627)	-	2,955
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
The Hedley Foundation	500	-	(500)	-	-
The Henry Smith Charity	-	60,000	(60,000)	-	-
The Rothley Trust	24	-	(24)	-	-
The Sir James Knott Charitable Trust	-	15,000	-	-	15,000
	25,016	82,500	(85,710)	-	21,806

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Baily Thomas Charitable Foundation grant was towards The Orchard project: Sensory Room/wellbeing space and equipment library costs.

The Boshier Hinton Foundation grant was for a summer activities programme.

The David Solomons Charitable Trust grant was towards the costs of running our Day Farming service.

The Bruce Wake Charity grant was towards an accessible ramp.

The Clothworkers Foundation grant was towards refurbishment of spaces within The Orchard project.

The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust grant was towards the costs of running our Day Farming service.

The Hedley Foundation grant was towards the Sensory Room/wellbeing space.

The Henry Smith Charity grant was towards the cost of running the Day Farming and Handy Person services.

The Rothley Trust grant was towards furniture and equipment within The Orchard project.

The Sir James Knott Charitable Trust grant was towards our Community Engagement project.

19. Analysis of funds

Year ended 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	66,070	-	66,070
Net current assets	412,529	21,806	434,335
	478,599	21,806	500,405

Year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	35,733	-	35,733
Net current assets	328,214	25,016	353,230
	363,947	25,016	388,963

20. Related parties

The husband of the CEO did some refurbishment and maintenance work, on an arms-length basis, during the year to the value of £8,709.73.

There have been no other transactions incurred with related parties during the period (2024 – none).

Thanks

Natural Ability would like to thank all of our Grant Funders, donors and fundraisers who give us the scope to improve and enhance the services we offer.

The Henry Smith Charity
founded in 1628


BALLINGER
CHARITABLE TRUST


EGGER
MORE FROM WOOD.


SIR JAMES KNOTT TRUST

 **The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust**


Bruce Wake Charitable Trust

David Solomons Charitable Trust

Trevor and Barbara Went

We would also like to thank all of our wonderful staff for their continued hard work and dedication.

 **natural ability**



Natural Ability
West Orchard House
Allendale Road
Hexham, NE46 2DE
01434 618149
www.naturalability.org
info@naturalability.org