

ALAG/Autism Hub

Registered Charity No. 1160477

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

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**ALAG/Autism Hub**

**Registered Charity No.**

**1160477**

**ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**TRUSTEES**

Chair

John Harrison

Vice Chair

Jason Crabtree

Secretary

Nick Stone

Treasurer

Jennifer Barker

Desmond Meldrum

Ricki Rittstieg

**REGISTERED OFFICE:**

C/o VAL, 200A Pentonville Road  
London  
N1 9JP

**BANKERS:**

National Westminster Bank Plc  
490 Holloway Road  
London  
N7 6HN

**ACCOUNTANTS:**

Charles Osei, BSc(Hons), MSc, ACIE, AFA, ATA, MCIPP  
Practical Accounting Training Ltd  
Equitable House, 2nd Floor  
10 Woolwich New Road  
London, SE18 6AB





## **Trustees' Annual Report for ALAG/Autism Hub**

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Charity name: ALAG (Asperger London Area Group)

Charity registration number: 1160477

The Trustees of ALAG (Asperger London Area Group) and its affiliate, the Autism Hub have taken regard of the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit in operating this charity. ALAG/Autism Hub continues to be a user-led organisation providing valuable social and emotional support to autistic adults (and their families) to build confidence, resilience, to help improve their sense of wellbeing and live more fulfilled lives.

Over the last financial year ALAG/Autism Hub has managed to gain a stronger footing with local authority funding. These successful funding applications have resulted in our services now operating with paid members of staff working alongside our volunteers. We now are able to provide a wider range of support for our members and to offer these much-needed services to more autistic adults who do not have a learning disability. The board of trustees have, with the lead service coordinators, continued to put in place policies and procedures to ensure the quality of the services we provide meets our funders' expectations.

The ALAG/Autism Hub trustees are pleased that local authorities recognise the value of our work, and we are grateful to everyone who has helped to make this funding breakthrough happen. As trustees, we are committed to being responsible custodians of public funds and are committed to deliver our services in line with the agreed purpose of the funding.

### ALAG/Autism Hub Governance

ALAG/Autism Hub has a clearly defined management structure ensuring effective decisions are being made within the organisation. As a general rule we aim to have trustees' meetings approximately four times a year as a minimum. Additional meetings were held after the lead joint coordinator retired in December 2021, to ensure a smooth handover. We continue to hold our meetings online rather than in person. This has been approved by the Charity Commission.

The ALAG/Autism Hub board of trustees is currently made up of five trustees:

John Harrison - Chair  
Jason Crabtree - Vice Chair  
Jennifer Barker - Treasurer  
Nick Stone - Secretary  
Ricki Rittstiege - Trustee

Desmond Meldrum - Trustee (resigned December 2021)

During this reporting period, one trustee has resigned, and one service coordinator has retired. At present we have the minimum number of trustees, however, we do plan to recruit additional trustees in the near future.

Our new lead service coordinator attended a training course on 'How to recruit trustees' delivered by Getting on Board. The practical guides obtained from the training course will inform future recruitment of trustees.





### *ALAG/Autism Staff & Volunteers*

ALAG/Autism Hub operations have expanded and been able to secure the expertise of self-employed specialists to deliver grant funded services.

#### Staff team:

Zainab Rahemtulla – Service & Operations Coordinator  
Jill Bradford – Volunteer & Projects Coordinator + HR Coordinator  
Nick Stone – ALAG/Autism Hub Peer Facilitator  
Ella Celeste – Autism Hub Drop-in Peer Facilitator  
Guy Eaton – Advocate  
Nasima Roman – Referrals Assessor & Benefits Advisor  
Nora Nstabana – Data Administrator

#### Autism specialist counsellors:

Sue Burchett  
Lorna Aher  
Dr. Ruth Millman  
Jennifer Snow  
Dr. Kassy Drossou  
Anna Hayward

ALAG/Autism Hub's counselling service consists of six self-employed counsellors – all of whom are now fully qualified counsellors and registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). We started with 3 trainee counsellors who finished their qualifications whilst they were on a student placement with the Autism Hub. Our counsellors, most of whom are autistic themselves, or have an autism specialism, provide autism informed therapy which considers any adjustments required during the sessions. Our counselling service supports individuals to process their diagnosis, understand their autism, and managing anxiety. We offer 6-10 sessions of free counselling to our users.

#### Volunteers:

JT – Technical support  
AN – Drop-in support  
AE – Training support  
RR – Administrative and training support  
VJ – Marketing and promotional material support  
Big Alliance CoRe Corporate Volunteers – content development, strategic advice

During the pandemic we had fewer volunteers than pre-pandemic, however, we have started to grow our volunteer pool again. We are still working on building our capacity to meet the demand, by expanding our staff team and volunteers, however, as we are a user led service, we require to do this at an appropriate pace to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and adequate supports are in place. We are incredibly fortunate that our volunteers, most of whom are autistic, have a range of skills which truly make the service user-led. Our volunteers and staff team support with website content, marketing and promotional material design, autism training development and delivery, technical support and administrative support to name a few. We aim to create a working environment that enables our team to develop their professional skills in a safe space that is autism informed.



### ALAG/Autism Hub Funding and Finance

ALAG/Autism Hub's financial position has significantly improved and developed since 2020/21. This is primarily due to the increased grant funding from local authorities and other local community grant funders. See table for details.

ALAG/Autism Hub holds cash reserves as a means of ensuring that it is able to respond to emergencies in a timely manner. Due to the increased grant funding, we are also building our non-committed reserves at a pace in line with increased expenditure to ensure we are able to manage any risks. This is reviewed quarterly.

We aim to increase our income revenue by delivering bespoke autism training led by autistic staff and volunteers. The staff team and volunteers have delivered a series of training to Camden Council staff and are contracted to deliver further training.

In line with our monitoring obligations, we are collating relevant qualitative and quantitative data to build a business case for Camden and Islington Local Authorities, for longer term grant funding to support their autistic residents and sustain the service.

Income Source 2021/2022	Amount		Comment
LBI- VCS	£17,500		VCS grant of £17,500 per year over three years to cover our core costs.
Cloudesley Community Fund	£2,000		To cover core costs- data administration
LBI/LBC Commissioners funding	£75,000		To support the Autism Hub Covid Response project for Islington & Camden residents
LBC multi-project funding	£49,150		Camden specific autism co-researcher project, Race & Equality project, and capacity building.
Camden Giving	£15,000		Community grant- £15,000 per year for two years to cover core costs- rent, bills, staff salaries, volunteer expenses
London Catalyst Fund	£700		Remaining funding from our Partners for Health project which commenced prior to the pandemic.
City of London- London Funders	£15,000		To cover staffing costs for advocate post for ALAG members.
Donations	£1,849.20		Donations made by regular donors and corporates.
Training income	£4,250		To deliver Autism Awareness Training to LBC staff.
Bank compensation	£850		





Total Income	£181,299.20		
Non-committed cash reserves		£18,533.20	

#### *ALAG/Autism Hub Services*

Throughout April 2021 – March 2022 ALAG/Autism Hub has continued to offer specialist counselling, peer support, advocacy, case work around housing issues, employment support, welfare benefits guidance and in addition supported autistic individuals to live healthier, more fulfilled lives. Providing the social and emotional support essential to their well-being by enabling them to be socially active and connected to their communities. We have also supported individuals to understand and come to terms with their diagnosis as part of our Partners for Health collaboration with the C&I diagnostic service and Covid Response Project funded by LBC and LBI.

#### *Monthly meetings –*

ALAG/Autism Hub have delivered 12 peer-led webinars and hybrid events moderated by our Peer-Facilitator, with a focus on wellbeing, staying safe and navigating the community during the uncertainty of the pandemic, managing lifting of lockdown, coping strategies, mental health and wellbeing, and navigating a post-pandemic world. The webinars offer a safe space for discussion, to receive peer support, share experiences of what has been helpful and what has not, ask questions and find out what is available locally and London wide.

#### *Peer-Support- Drop-in Service –*

ALAG/Autism Hub have delivered 46 virtual and in-person weekly drop-in sessions. Our peer-led drop-in sessions run for 2hrs every Monday between 11:00-13:00. The first half of the session is less structured and provides an opportunity for people to meet, raise topics they would like to discuss, and ask questions. The second half is more structured with an activity ie a quiz, or mindfulness practice. It is a forum for peer-support in a small group setting, to keep users informed of relevant and upcoming events, to voice what matters to them, and what they may need support with.

#### *Autism specific counselling –*

ALAG/Autism Hub have delivered over 450 counselling sessions during the reporting period. We offer weekly 6-10 sessions per client. We have increased our capacity for sessions delivered including number of sessions offered. Due to the pandemic, we have received an increased number of self-referrals and have been dealing with cases of increased complexity which require additional sessions and support.

#### *Casework & Advocacy support –*

We provide advocacy for service users who require support to navigate and liaise with external services and systems ie. Benefit claims, housing, adult social care etc. Our aim is to





work with external agencies to make reasonable adjustments and offer consultation on creating autism-informed pathways for our users to access. We have employed two part-time Advocates during this reporting period.

#### Skill building workshops –

ALAG/Autism Hub have built partnerships with local corporations as part of their corporate social responsibility agenda. This has enabled us to raise autism awareness and encouraged them to adopt reasonable adjustments with their staff team in exchange for delivering skills-based workshops for our members and service users. This includes CV writing, Interview skills, coding and organised visits for members and users to learn about various industries.

#### Training –

The Autism Hub/ALAG have received funding to deliver 5 Autism Awareness Training (AAT) sessions to LBC staff with the aim to increase autism-informed practice and knowledge amongst front-line staff. This can include practitioners, library staff, customer service representatives, housing officers etc.

#### Pandemic and post-pandemic service delivery –

During the height of the pandemic, many autistic adults reported increased levels of anxiety, isolation, bereavement, disruption to routines, difficulty accessing health and mental health services, housing issues, and employment issues. In response, ALAG/Autism Hub initiated the Covid Response Project supported by Camden and Islington local authorities and adapted all its services to be delivered virtually or by telephone in order to reach our users during lockdown.

As we enter a post-pandemic era, these issues and themes still remain very relevant. We have noted an increase in ill mental health and wellbeing, isolation, negative impact on physical health conditions, and complex presentations. As a result, statutory services have increased backlogs with long waiting times, and are heavily under-resourced. This has a residual impact on community sector services, who tend to support individuals whilst they are waiting for statutory services. This increases the risk we carry including staff burnout, and safeguarding concerns/risks that we must manage.

We are mindful that the pandemic is not over and we continue to support our members to access our services by offering a combination of some in-person and online activities. We completed a survey earlier this year to ask our users their preference for online and in-person events. The majority opted for the option for events to be delivered in a hybrid format so that people have the option online and in-person. We have delivered two hybrid events during this reporting period at a cost, and are searching for suitable venues where we can deliver hybrid events at a reasonable cost.

The ALAG/Autism Hub trustees are pleased with what has been achieved in the year April 2021 to March 2022. The expansion of services despite the drawback and disadvantages of the pandemic is a testament of the hard work, dedication and commitment of our staff team, counsellors and volunteers who have gone the extra mile in all areas to ensure this excellent service continues to have a positive impact in the community as a whole. We believe we are well placed to continue delivering our services in the coming year 2022/23.





Signed on behalf of ALAG/Autism Hub trustees

Signature:

Full name: Jennifer Barker

Position: Treasurer Trustee

Date: 04/12/2022

Trustees' Annual Report for ALAG/Autism Hub

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Charity name: ALAG (Asperger London Area Group)

Charity registration number: 1160477

The ALAG/Autism Hub Trustees for April 2021 to March 2022 are as follows:

Mr John Harrison - Chair

Dr Jason Crabtree - Vice Chair

Ms Jennifer Barker - Treasurer

Mr Nick Stone – Secretary

Ms Ricki Rittstiege – Trustee

Mr Desmond Meldrum – Trustee (resigned December 2021)

Charity Registered Address: ALAG, C/o VAI, 200A Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP

National Westminster Bank Plc

Branch sort code: 60-08-22

Account number: 60696257



**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
TO THE TRUSTEES OF ALAG/AUTISM HUB**

I report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 set out on pages 8 - 13

This report is made solely to the Trustees of ALAG/Autism Hub, as a body, in accordance with regulations made under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and Charity SORP (frs). My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Trustees matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and Charity's trustees for my independent examination work, for this report, or for the statement I have given below.

**Respective responsibilities of Trustees and independent examiner**

As charity trustees, for the purposes of charity law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, the Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

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

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

**Basis of independent examiner's statement**

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 reports limited to those matters set out in the statement on the next page.



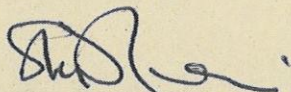
Registered Charity No. 1160477

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
TO THE TRUSTEES OF ALAG/AUTISM HUB (Cont'd)**

**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
  - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.



Charles Osei, BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIE, AFA, ATA, MCIPP  
Practical Accounting Training Ltd,  
Equitable House, 2nd Floor  
10 Woolwich New Road, London, SE18 5AB

Date 5/12/22



ALAG/Autism Hub

Registered Charity No. 1160477

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2022**

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2021/22</u> £	<u>2020/21</u> £
Fixed Assets		-	-
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and in hand		142,589	55,669
		142,589	55,669
Creditors: Amount due within One Year			
Net Assets/Liabilities		<u>142,589</u>	<u>55,669</u>
<b>Reserves.</b>			
General Funds		25,664	10,884
Restricted Funds:		116,925	44,785
		<u>142,589</u>	<u>55,669</u>

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

John Harrison  
Chair

Jennifer Barker  
Treasurer



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021/22 Total Funds £	2020/21 Total Funds £
<b>Resources Arising</b>					
Income from Charitable Activities		16,570		16,570	900
Grants			164,729	164,729	58,324
Other Income			0	-	600
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>16,570</u>	<u>164,729</u>	<u>181,299</u>	<u>59,824</u>
 <b>Direct Charitable Expenditure</b>	 2	 1,080	 93,299	 94,379	 28,488
 <b>Total Expenditure</b>		 <u>1,080</u>	 <u>93,299</u>	 <u>94,379</u>	 <u>28,488</u>
<b>Resources retained for further use</b>		15,490	71,430	86,920	31,336
<b>Transfer between Funds</b>					
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>					
<b>Reconciliations of Funds</b>					
Brought forward 01/04/2021		10,174	45,495	55,669	24,333
 Carried forward 31/03/2022		 <u><u>25,664</u></u>	 <u><u>116,925</u></u>	 <u><u>142,589</u></u>	 <u><u>55,669</u></u>



**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation.**

These accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis and include income and expenditure as they are earned or incurred, rather than as cash received or paid. The recommendations of the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (frs) and Charities Act 2011 have been followed.

**Fund Accounting.**

The general funds consist of funds that the Trustees may use for ALAG/Autism's charitable purposes at their discretion.

The restricted funds are those where the donor has imposed restrictions on the use of the funds, which are legally binding. Restricted funds held in reserve at the end of the year represent income received from donors to be spent within the following year. Details of these funds are set out on the separate schedule in Note 5.

**Voluntary Income**

All voluntary income and donations are recognised and included in the accounts as they are received.

**Direct Charitable Expenditure.**

Direct charitable expenditure comprises all costs incurred in running the Charity that are directly attributable to the Charity's projects.

**Governance costs**

Include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity.

**Fund-raising Expenditure.**

Fund-raising expenditure comprises costs incurred in inducing people or organisations to contribute financially to the Charity's work.



**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**2 Resources Expended**

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021/22 £	2020/21 £
IT & Communication	-	500	500	429
Staff - Client facing	1,080	84,097	85,177	8,491
General Expenses	-	321	321	39
Insurance	-	466	466	445
Counselling	-	-	-	7,507
Rent	-	7,380	7,380	1,155
Research gift vouchers	-	-	-	360
LB Camden	-	-	-	10,000
Professional fees	-	535	535	63
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>93,299</b>	<b>94,379</b>	<b>28,488</b>