

Autistic Children and Carers Together

Registered Charity Number 1169099

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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Autistic Children and Carers Together

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees:	Helen Gilder – Chair Claire Dyson - resigned 6 August 2024 Margaret Kilner Nadine Cain Sara Bartlett Brown Sharon Court – appointed 24 June 2024 Janet Himan – appointed 21 October 2024
Honorary Trustees:	Dr. Nevyne Chalhoub, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust Dr. Val Harpin, Retired Consultant Neurodevelopmental Paediatrician
Staff:	Manager, 17.5 hours per week; Fundraising & Finance Coordinator, 16 hours per week; Deputy Coordinators (job share), 13 hours per week; Project Manager, 6 hours per week; Sessional Playworkers x 22
Principal Address:	St Mary's Community Centre Bramall Lane Sheffield S2 4QZ
Independent Examiner:	Terry Scully
Bankers:	Lloyds Church Street Sheffield

Autistic Children and Carers Together

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

Report from the Chair

Thank you for reading the 2024-25 annual report of Autistic Children and Carers Together (ACCT), our Sheffield charity supporting autistic young people and their families.

We were pleased to be able to offer such a wide range of activities last year with up to eight sessions available each week, including the multi-activity Activate and Teenage Club, ACCT Academy football sessions, online and in-person Dungeons & Dragons and other creative gaming sessions, InterACCT teenage drama group, ACCTing Out young adults' social group, parent-carer meetings, autism-friendly family swimming and other family trips.

Places at ACCT sessions remained in high demand. We are seeing more young people who need additional behavioural support to help them access our activities. While challenging, it is testament to the skill and commitment of the staff and volunteer team that we have been able to work with so many families to devise strategies and approaches that help young people in need benefit from their engagement with ACCT sessions.

ACCT has a strong core staff team supported by excellent sessional workers and volunteers. Our thanks and best wishes to sessional staff and volunteers who have moved on from ACCT over the year and a warm welcome to new and returning personnel.

Financially, we are delighted to have been reappointed to the Sheffield City Council SNIPS framework for 2025-29 and to have secured Reaching Communities funding for a three-year project. This funding provides some financial stability as we move into 2025-26 and enables us to focus on several areas of development work that we hope will improve our financial sustainability for the long-term.

It is wonderful that so many people also support ACCT with donations. In addition to the people who provide monthly or one-off donations towards our work, we also organised a team of runners who took on the challenge of the Sheffield 10k in September 2024: through sponsorship from friends, colleagues and families, the runners raised more than £5,000 for ACCT. Two runners also completed the Sheffield Half Marathon in March 2025, raising a further £1,200.

We were honoured to be selected as one of the charities supported by the Sole Sisters, a group of women organising events and challenges to raise money for good causes. Ending their campaign with an epic 20 mile Edale Skyline walk, the Sole Sisters raised more than £4,000 for ACCT - an amazing effort.

At governance level, long-standing trustee Claire Dyson left the board in August 2024. A huge thank you to Claire for all she has given to ACCT over the years and we are so pleased that Claire is continuing to be involved as a facilitator of the parent-carer meetings.

We also welcomed Sharon Court and Janet Himan as trustees, who have brought a wealth of experience to their roles. Many thanks to all my colleagues on the board who volunteer their time and skills to provide excellent governance and strategic support to the charity, members and the staff team. The Manager and Trustees have reviewed ACCT's policies and procedures, ensuring we are following best practice for a charity of our size working with vulnerable children.

Finally, thank you to all ACCT members and supporters for everything you do to help improve the lives of autistic children and their families in Sheffield.

Helen Gilder, Chair

Autistic Children and Carers Together

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution dated 8th September 2016 and as amended on 17 March 2023.

ACCT previously operated as an unincorporated charity - Asperger's Children and Carers Together (ACCT) Sheffield, registered charity 1123714 - which was re-formed as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registered charity 1169099) from 1st April 2017.

The charity name was formally changed to Autistic Children and Carers Together on 17 March 2023 with an amended constitution and charitable object which updated the language used in relation to autism:

The object of the CIO is to support the needs of autistic children and young people living in the Sheffield area, in particular by provision of services and assistance to them and their family and carers, irrespective of political or religious affiliation, race, gender or sexual orientation.

Overall governance of the charity is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected from the membership and co-opted at the Annual General Meeting under the terms of the constitution. The Board of Trustees meets 10 times per year and has responsibility for managing the business of the organisation, safeguarding the assets and managing funds. Day to day activity is delivered by paid staff and volunteers.

Trustees serve for a term of three years at the end of which they are eligible to stand for re-election. Trustees are primarily drawn from ACCT's 700+ members, who are mainly parents and carers of autistic/neurodivergent children, or autistic people themselves. We may also co-opt Trustees from outside the membership to bring additional skills or experience onto the board.

Risk Assessment

The Board of Trustees regularly discusses and reviews all the major risks to which ACCT is exposed, and establishes suitable systems to mitigate those risks. We maintain an organisation-wide risk register which is regularly reviewed and updated by trustees, with risk assessments carried out for all activities and managed by the ACCT Manager.

Financial Review

Our annual income for the year was £181,092 and expenditure was £195,916. Just over £20,000 of restricted reserves carried forward from 2023-24 were spent during 2024-25, mainly the remainder of our Lottery People's Projects grant.

We would like to thank the many funding bodies and individuals who continue to support our work financially.

Our current contract agreement with Sheffield City Council's Short Breaks for Disabled Children (SNIPS) programme ended on 30 April 2025. We applied to the delivery framework for the new contract period and were very pleased to be reappointed to provide places at Activate and Teenage Club for autistic young people referred via the local authority Short Breaks programme for the period 2025-29. This local authority contract has long been ACCT's single biggest source of funding and its continuation with an uplift to ensure costs are covered is a real boost to ACCT's financial stability for the next four years.

We also secured a grant of £10,792 from Sheffield City Council's Universal Youth Grants programme which supported our InterACCT Drama group through 2024-25.

Autistic Children and Carers Together

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

We have been developing our focus on creativity and gameplay and were grateful that the National Lottery Reaching Communities programme offered ACCT a £120k three-year grant towards this. Starting in January 2025, the grant supports the continued development of our online and in-person tabletop and role-playing gaming sessions, and our creative drama-based activities group.

It is also hugely welcome to receive unrestricted funding from grant-makers who are happy to support the core work of charities like ours. Amongst others, we were very grateful to receive £15,000 from the Wharfedale Foundation, £5,000 from the Masonic Charitable Foundation and to be reappointed to the Sheffield Town Trust's subscription list of grant recipients.

Similarly, we really appreciate the support of ACCT members and other individual supporters who continue to be generous donors, with regular giving, one-off donations, sponsorships and gift aid providing 19% of ACCT's income in 2024-25.

In 2025-26, we will continue to raise money from a range of contracts, grants and donations, and will be focusing on better engagement with our wider supporter network.

Reserves policy

ACCT needs to hold financial reserves in a realisable form in order to manage cashflow, meet unforeseen expenditure needs and ensure an orderly wind down in the unlikely event that the charity needs to close.

The trustees consider it prudent that the charity should hold unrestricted reserves sufficient to cover at least three months' running costs plus an amount set aside to ensure that ACCT can meet statutory redundancy payments to staff and other financial obligations in the event that the charity had to close down.

For 2024-25, this equates to £48,979 to cover three months running costs and £27,737 for close-down costs, a total target unrestricted reserves level of at least £76,716. At 31 March 2025, our total unrestricted reserves were £86,739.

Public Benefit

Autistic Children and Carers Together provides public benefit by delivering group activity sessions which support autistic children and young people to develop confidence and emotional resilience, practice vital life skills and engage with the world, make lasting friendships, and become empowered to better understand and celebrate the role their neurodivergence plays in their identity.

We aim to support parent-carers to gain knowledge, skills and confidence around parenting autistic children, and for families to develop the emotional resilience to address internal and external challenges related to neurodivergence, such as managing stressful times of transition, or dealing with bureaucratic intransigence.

Our activities are designed to enable stronger mutually supportive peer relationships between young people, between parents and between families that can continue outside of ACCT. By supporting a growing and empowered autism community in Sheffield, we can increase autism awareness in wider society, improving outcomes by helping families identify neurodiversity and seek support at an earlier stage.

Achievements and Performance

ACCT has been supporting autistic children and their families in Sheffield since 2006. We have

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Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

learned a lot about the use of fun activities as a way of helping young people to relax and be themselves without having to mask or hide behaviours that don't fit in with what neurotypical people might expect. And we have continued to develop our activities in order to support the social development of neurodivergent young people and provide support to parents and family members.

During 2024-25, we delivered:

Acctivate multi-activity club for 30 children aged 5-12 on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evening **Teenage Club** for 30 teenagers. Sessions include games and construction, arts and crafts, a sensory room and football and outside activities. Amongst other activities, we were happy to welcome several University sports teams to run taster sessions for our young people.

These sessions continued to be busy and we manage bookings carefully to ensure that all places are taken up and that as many young people as possible are able to get the support they need. We work with Sheffield City Council as part of the SNIPS contract framework on referrals to these groups as well as supporting a small number of self-referrals from families with young people in need who are outside the SNIPS eligibility.

ACCT Academy football coaching for up to 24 children and young people aged 7-16 per session. These sessions, focused on fun and inclusivity, are held every Friday evening, 6-7pm at Goals Sheffield. We have two groups for younger and older children.

ACCT Gaming Clubs support cooperative gameplay, imagination, flexibility and promote safe and positive online behaviour. We ran two sessions per week with sessions focusing on Dungeons & Dragons and other tabletop and role-playing games.

ACCTing Out is our vibrant group for young autistic adults which runs fortnightly social events, supporting young adults to develop independent living skills. This project has gone from strength to strength and celebrated 100 sessions in May 2025.

Our **InterACCT teenage drama group** continued with three blocks of sessions during the year. Many thanks to Forced Entertainment who provided the expert drama facilitation at the beginning of the year and to A Mind Apart who facilitated sessions in the latter part of the year and will continue in 2025-26.

Parent-carer meetings ran every fortnight, offering a space for discussion, information sharing, practical advice and peer support, facilitated by ACCT trustees, volunteers and ACCT's Manager, Nicola Hough.

We continued to offer whole family activities, including autism-friendly family swimming every two weeks at Hillsborough Leisure Centre. As a private hire session, we can better manage the leisure centre environment to make the sensory experience more accessible to neurodivergent people. We take a similar approach to our regular private hire family sessions at Air Haus.

Thanks to support from the Happy Days programme, we organised a trip to the pantomime at Sheffield Theatres on a donate-if-you-can basis, an always popular trip that offers many families an experience they would not otherwise be able to access.

We supported more than 500 autistic children and young people during the year, more than 250 through accessing in-person and online group activities, and 250+ via participation in family activities. In addition, more than 40 parent-carers accessed support via Parents' Meetings, with 100+ siblings and other family members benefiting from our whole family activities.

Autistic Children and Carers Together

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2025

Plans for 2025-26

In addition to continuing to develop and deliver a full programme of supportive groups for autistic young people and their families, there are several key areas of development we are planning to progress in 2025-26:

- Deaf accessibility: including offering interpreters at some family Air Haus sessions to enable deaf and hard of hearing parents of autistic young people to engage with ACCT.
- Swimming accessibility: exploring the issues around accessing leisure swimming as autistic children or adults, and developing resources for people and providers to help make swimming more accessible.
- Parents and families programme: identifying unmet needs for families within our existing provision and implementing new and redeveloped activities that best support parents and families.
- Membership engagement: development work to ensure that the wider ACCT membership has every opportunity to engage with the charity and be involved in shaping our work.

Trustees' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit for the period. In preparing these financial statements, Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to prepare the financial statements. 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.

Independent Examiner

The trustees have appointed Mr. Terry Scully to provide an Independent Examination Report on the accounts for the year.

On behalf of the board of trustees,

Helen Gilder, Chair



9th October 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Autistic Children and Carers Together

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 9-15.

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(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

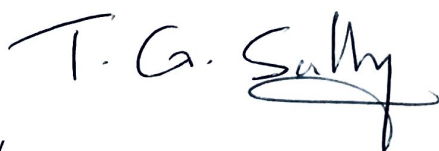
Basis of independent examiner's report

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 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



T G Scully
63 Argyle Road, Sheffield, S8 9HG

Date 9th October 2025

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st March 2025

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Contracts	6	-	66,198	66,198	57,469
Grants	7	33,960	44,256	78,216	126,165
Donations		34,994	-	34,994	26,721
Bank Interest		1,684	-	1,684	1,379
		<u>70,638</u>	<u>110,454</u>	<u>181,092</u>	<u>211,734</u>
Salaries NI and Pensions		48,579	87,371	135,950	138,865
Rent rates and Room Hire		13,511	16,572	30,083	26,945
Activity Delivery Costs		4,694	8,872	13,566	17,166
Equipment		-	-	-	102
Training		1,019	-	1,019	2,329
Travel		8	-	8	43
Volunteer costs		506	172	678	675
Office costs		2,166	-	2,166	3,120
Fundraising costs		1,607	-	1,607	872
Finance and accountancy costs		2,531	-	2,531	2,354
DBS checks		859	-	859	905
Professional fees		479	1,478	1,957	1,293
Insurance		1,492	-	1,492	1,439
Depreciation		610	2,790	3,400	3,758
Examiners Fees		600	-	600	350
		<u>78,661</u>	<u>117,255</u>	<u>195,916</u>	<u>200,216</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)		(8,023)	(6,801)	(14,824)	11,518
Total funds brought forward		94,762	25,278	120,040	108,522
Total funds carried forward		86,739	18,477	105,216	120,040

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Balance Sheet
At 31 March 2025

		2025	2024
	note	£	£
Fixed Assets	8	1,825	5,225
Current Assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		105,053	118,120
Debtors and accrued income		-	-
		<u>105,053</u>	<u>118,120</u>
Current Liabilities			
Accruals and deferred income	9	1,662	3,305
		<u>1,662</u>	<u>3,305</u>
Net current assets		<u>103,391</u>	<u>114,815</u>
Net Assets		<u>105,216</u>	<u>120,040</u>
Funds			
Restricted	11	18,477	25,278
Unrestricted		<u>86,739</u>	<u>94,762</u>
Total Funds		<u>105,216</u>	<u>120,040</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on the 20th October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Helen Gilder, Chair

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2025

Accounting Policies

- 1 The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of investments and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice : Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011.

a) Incoming resources

Incoming resources have been included on a receivable basis. Grants and voluntary income are accounted for in the year in which they are received unless receipt has become certain at the balance sheet date, and allocated to the period in which it applies if appropriate. Resources restricted to a specific purpose are carried forward until spent. Other income is accrued as it becomes due.

b) Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred, and include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered. The analysis follows a natural classification.

c) Allocation of costs

Costs directly related to an activity are allocated to that activity. Support costs, which are necessary to deliver an activity but do not themselves deliver the activity, are allocated in proportion to the benefit attributable. Governance costs are those costs incurred in meeting statutory and constitutional requirements.

d) Restricted funds

Funds are identified as restricted where they are received for a specific purpose or project and where the donor may require repayment if the conditions are not met.

e) Donations in kind

Donations in kind or goods or services are accounted for using the trustees' estimate of their value. No value is attributed to the activities of trustees or voluntary helpers.

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2025

Accounting Policies - continued

1 f) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are included at original cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided to write off each asset over its estimated useful life on a straight line basis.

The applicable rates are:

IT and visual equipment 25%

Notes to the Accounts

2 Taxation

As a registered charity, ACCT is exempt from income and capital taxes on its charitable activities.

3 Trustees' remuneration and related party transactions

Trustees received no remuneration. Expenses were paid in reimbursement of costs incurred on behalf of the charity. No more than £100 was involved in total. No trustees reported any interests in contracts involving ACCT.

4 Staff costs and numbers:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	127,084	130,547
Pension contributions	6,501	6,216
Health care scheme	2,365	2,102
	<u>135,950</u>	<u>138,865</u>

	2025	2024
Average number of Staff (part time)	28	24

No employees were paid more than £60,000.

5 Fees for examination of accounts

	2025	2024
	£	£
Independent examiner	600	350

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2025

6 Contracts	2025	2024
SCC Short break contract	66,198	57,469

The SCC contract is part of the Special Needs Inclusion Playcare Service (SNIPS) framework and funds Short Break activity places for autistic children and young people at Acctivate and Teenage Club

7 Grants	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Ann Rylands Small Doations Scheme	1,500		1,500	-
Co-op Local Causes Fund	500		500	-
Cutler's Company Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	1,000
Fitton Trust	300		300	200
Forrester Family Trust	5,000		5,000	-
Hyman Winstone Foundation	500		500	500
James Neill Trust Fund		2,500	2,500	-
Kaye Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	-
Masonic Charitable Foundation	5,000		5,000	-
National Lottery Reaching Communities		19,569	19,569	-
Olive Lawrence Charitable Trust	1,000		1,000	2,000
SCC Universal Youth Grants		10,792	10,792	-
Sheffield Parent Carer Forum		1,000	1,000	-
Sheffield Town Trust	2,500		2,500	4,500
STA CommUNITY STArters		1,000	1,000	-
Tesco Community Grants		375	375	2,125
Tesco Stronger Starts		1,000	1,000	-
Trustees of Elsie Lawrence Deceased	660		660	-
United Way		1,500	1,500	-
Wesleyan Foundation		6,520	6,520	-
Wharfedale Foundation	15,000		15,000	-
	<u>33,960</u>	<u>44,256</u>	<u>78,216</u>	<u>10,325</u>

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2025

Accounting Policies - continued

8 Fixed Assets

	IT Equipment	Visual Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1/4/24	14,485	549	15,034
Additions	-	-	-
At 31/3/25	<u>14,485</u>	<u>549</u>	<u>15,034</u>
Depreciation			
At 1/4/24	9,363	446	9,809
Charge for the year	3,297	103	3,400
At 31/3/25	<u>12,660</u>	<u>549</u>	<u>13,209</u>
Net Book Value			
At 31/3/25	<u>1,825</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,825</u>
At 31/3/24	<u>5,122</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>5,225</u>

9 Creditors - amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
Taxes and pensions	-	724
Trade debtors	1,062	2,231
Accruals	600	350
	<u>1,662</u>	<u>3,305</u>

10 Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	27	1,798	1,825
Current assets	88,375	16,679	105,054
Creditors falling due within one year	(1,663)	-	(1,663)
	<u>86,739</u>	<u>18,477</u>	<u>105,216</u>

Autistic Children and Carers Together
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st March 2025

11 Restricted Funds

	Balance at 01/04/2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31/03/2025
SCC Contract	-	66,198	(66,198)	-	-
James Neill Trust Fund	-	2,500	(1,040)	-	1,460
Tesco Community Grants	638	375	(1,013)	-	-
Hargreaves Foundation	1,875	-	(1,875)	-	-
Nat. Lottery People's Projects	17,677	-	(17,677)	-	-
Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	500	1,000	(1,500)	-	-
SCC Universal Youth Grants	-	10,792	(10,792)	-	-
Wesleyan Foundation	-	6,520	(3,803)	-	2,717
Nat. Lottery Reaching Comm's	-	19,569	(9,067)	-	10,502
United Way	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
STA CommUNITY STArters	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Tesco Stronger Starts	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Restricted Asset fund	4,588		(2,790)	-	1,798
	<u>25,278</u>	<u>110,454</u>	<u>(117,255)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,477</u>

Restricted funds were received for the following purposes:

SCC Contract	Staff, venue and activity costs for 28 Activate places and 24 Teenage Club places
James Neill Trust Fund	Friday football coaching sessions
Tesco Community Grants	Towards swimming costs (hire and staff time)
Hargreaves Foundation	Football project expenses
Nat. Lottery People's Projects	Delivery costs of all young people's groups
Sheffield Parent Carer Forum	Staff costs and venue hire costs for Air Haus family trips
SCC Universal Youth Grants	Drama club
Wesleyan Foundation	In-person ACCT Gaming sessions
Nat. Lottery Reaching Comm's	ACCT Gaming, Drama and ACCTing Out sessions plus contribution towards core
United Way	Swimming pool hire and staff coordination costs
STA CommUNITY STArters	To improve swimming accessibility for autistic people
Tesco Stronger Starts	Friday football coaching sessions