



CAN-Abilities Foundation – Charity Number 1180031

Reports of the trustees for the year ending March 2021.

This is the report of the trustees of CAN-Abilities Foundation for the year 2020-2021. It begins by noting that 2020-2021 has been an incredibly challenging year mainly because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The report then presents a summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document. It also presents an overview of the main activities of the Foundation about the purposes and confirms that the trustees have had regard to guidance issued by the charity commission on public benefit.

2021-2022 at a Glance

Last year has indeed been challenging for many across the globe. Especially challenging for small charities like CAN-Abilities Foundation. More so because we deal with the most vulnerable who were forced to shield during the pandemic. Also, it has impacted us financially thereby making it impossible to sustain most of our planned activities.

Purpose and activities

CAN-Abilities Foundation is a small family founded charity whose main mission is *to relieve the needs of those suffering from autistic spectrum conditions and other learning disabilities*

This purpose is realised through undertaking the following activities include

- Provision of practical support, like advice and raising awareness of autism and the difficulties faced by autistic persons and their families.
- Advocacy information sessions and signposting services.
- Basic admin and clerical services.
- Teach and support other parents of autistic children or those with special needs to be able to not only conquer the fears that come with parenting special needs children but to be able to thrive despite the challenges

In shaping our objectives and planning various activities for the year, CAN-Abilities' trustees have taken into consideration the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. For example

- As a result of the Coronavirus, there were many restrictions imposed on society such as lockdowns and social distancing amongst others. This meant that we could not organise a face-to-face event as has been the case before. Our main support and information sessions shifted to virtual space, holding online or on the phone. We used Zoom, Stream Yard, and other virtual conferencing platforms to host autism information and education sessions. For example, the main autism/ disability-related events conducted virtually since last year are presented below in date order and available on our Facebook platforms.



1. 13.3.21: International Women's Day virtual OUTREACH Summit where women around the world joined us in discussions around the theme "choose to challenge." Amongst these women were mums of special needs children who chose to challenge the Isolation and its impact on their mental health that comes because of parenting special needs children and that which have been aggravated by the presence of the Pandemic
2. 01.04.21: Our chairperson joined the learning disability Nurse at Hampshire Hospitals NHS foundation trust, as part of the autism awareness week activities, to share her experiences with raising an autistic child and tips on how to support other parents when faced with a diagnosis.
3. 2.4.21: Online event which marked the beginning of "our Virtual autism awareness conversations which will take place all through April. These conversations are aimed at educating, empowering, inspiring, and giving hope to parents of special needs children who have been struggling throughout this Pandemic. These virtual conversations will include autistic individuals, parents, schoolteachers, specialists, professionals, and everyone with a special interest in special educational needs autism and co-occurring conditions.
4. 10.4.21: AUTISM AND SIBLINGS; When autism affects a member of a family, it affects the whole family especially the siblings and the parents. So, as part of the autism awareness week celebrations, we had an online conversation with a sibling of an autistic individual, who shared his experience and challenges he faced during the lockdown. This is a way was to encourage and empower all other siblings around the world to be able to share their experiences to help those who are not able to do so. Apart from just sharing his challenges, he also shared his top tips on how to support a sibling who is autistic.
5. 11.4.21 – AUTISM AND THE CHURCH; One of the places where there seems to lack of awareness and acceptance is the church. So, during this live event, we had as guest speakers; Priests, parents and teachers of autistic individuals who shared the experiences they have had with the church and these kids in the past and the priests on the part talked extensively about the role of the church in the lives of families and individuals affected by autism and adjustments to be made soon.
6. 14.4.21 – WHEN AUTISM Grieves; as a result of the unpredictable emergence of covid 19 in our midst, the whole world was taken by surprise, we were in denial of its existence, many were angry because of the restrictions imposed on everyone; lockdown, quarantine, isolation, we all found ourselves bargaining, some were hit so hard that their mental health was affected before we eventually accepted that the virus was real. As such, it was established that despite the fact many struggled, others suffered the consequences especially families and individuals with autism. As such, there was an online webinar to look at the impact of grief on autistic individuals including those who lost loved ones during the lockdown period., how it affected them, how they coped and what can be done further to help or support many families in a comparable situation. Our guest speakers were a teacher and a parent who shared



extensively on grief. The parent shared her experience with her son when she lost her husband during the lock and because of grief and the confusion that comes with it and given his condition, her son went out looking for his dad and eventually got missing and was found in Liverpool from London

7. 2.5.21; **IMPACT OF AUTISM ON VARIOUS ASPECT OF THE COMMUNITY;** Autism does not only have an impact on the family. It extends right to the community, the church, schools, hospitals. So, during this session, we had an elaborate discussion with a priest, a teacher, a paediatric doctor, an autism consultant, and a parent.
8. There was a general awareness that autism awareness and running a charity of this nature requires more than one charity or platform. The charity's chairperson engaged in a beauty and empowerment program as a means of continuing to look for better and improved ways to continue to give a voice to and encourage love, understanding, acceptance and inclusion for those affected by autism and mental health issues. Being a contestant in the programme was used for support and exposure which helped to amplify the voice of autism awareness in the BAME communities here in the UK. The finals took place in August 2021 and even though the charity did not emerge as the winner, there were some valuable lessons learned, including the fact that parents of autistic children are not lost just because they have an autistic child does not stop them from pursuing their dreams towards empowering themselves, gaining more clarity to be able to support their children properly the others in the community. This was were shared on our YouTube channel.
9. 27.11.21; **CELEBRATING SPECIAL MEN'S POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO WORK, FAMILY, COMMUNITY:** This was an event in celebration of international men's day where we covered a whole episode speaking with parents of autistic children and autistic adults and their positive impact on the lives of their children and the community. It was confirmed that not all dads of special needs children abandon their children. Many stay in the lives of their children and make an enormous impact on their lives.
10. 4.12.21: **Living with a disability during covid-19 and its impact on our mental health** and not all disabilities are visible; During this episode, we had individuals living with different types of disabilities share the experiences living with a disability in the pandemic, how it affected them and those around them and advice on what can be done differently to improve on accessibility especially when almost all activities were online.
11. 11.12.21; **EMBRACING YOUR SPECIAL NEDS CHILD;** Speaking and engaging with parents especially of the BAME communities, we learned that some parents are still in denial of their children's diagnosis, and we decided to share a live conversation on what they can do to accept and embrace their child.
12. 18.12.21; Many parents struggled with various aspects of their health during the pandemic, and we thought it was an innovative idea to share tips on **SELF CARE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**. It was established that just accepting and embracing your child and the journey is also self-care.



13. 15.1.22 – COPING WITH A DIAGNOSIS: A JOURNEY FROM DENIAL TO ACCEPTANCE: This episode looked more critically into a parent's journey from when a child is diagnosed with autism and how they eventually accept and embrace the journey.
 14. 22.1.22; MONEY MINDSET: Many parents of children with a disability struggle in several aspects of their lives including financially. So, having a live event on our money mindset will go a long way to help parents understand what a money mindset is and how they can use the tips shared to help them manage their finances effectively eventually.
 15. 12.2.22: Autism; A Life in the Pandemic: The charity has been invited by another autism organisation in Manchester to present a talk on autism based on experiences during the pandemic, the difficulties faced, what worked and tips on what the community can do to support more individuals and families affected by autism.
 16. 12.3.22 – Another organisation London, Women of Influence has also invited Charity's Chair to give a talk to other parents on Self-care and its importance on our mental health
 17. 16. 4.22: An event in Bournemouth to celebrate those who made a difference in the lives of others during the pandemic has also invited us to share our experiences during the pandemic; what helped and how others can also be supported.
- Most of these helped to raise awareness and provide advice strategies to parents, carers, and the public on how to stay safe during COVID but also about how to look after their mental and physical health during these challenging times.
 - Our volunteers were also busy on the phone, being a listening eye and providing reassurance to families and carers most of who felt abandoned as several services for their children were closed during the pandemic.

Achievements and Performance

CAN-Abilities registered some achievements in 2020-2021. We managed to embrace technology, being able to learn and successfully set up our channels on useful video conferencing platforms which we used to reach a diverse audience across the globe. Our successes have also been recognised by our local media. The Chairperson of our board of trustees was featured in the Basingstoke Gazette Newspaper. Her initiatives as well as the fantastic work of CAN-Abilities was chronicled in the newspaper. As a result of this, CAN-Abilities has been invited by the Basingstoke Consortium, a group of five community-based organisations in the borough to lead autism awareness activities during events planned as part of Autism Awareness month this April.

Financial Review

Due to some of the challenges already highlighted above CAN-Abilities Foundation has struggled financially this year. Our net income balance at the end of the period 2020-2021 was



£3,656.04. The total expenditure for the year amounted to ££3,121.51, leaving a balance of £534.53. Full details of the income and expenditure are available in the financial statement.

Statement of Financial Activities for 2020 including Income and Expenditure

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total £'000
Incoming Resources				
Voluntary Income	3	£75.00	0	£75.00
Donations	16	£2,341.04	0	£2,341.04
Fund Raising Campaigns	0	£0.00	0	£0.00
Commercial Operations	2	£1,240.00	0	£1,240.00
Total Income		£3,656.04	0	£3,656.04
Resources Expended				
Administration Costs		£0,520.75	0	£0,520.75
Charitable Activities		£1,150.14	0	£1,150.14
Equipment Costs		£0,245.15	0	£0,245.15
Operation Costs		£0,759.25	0	£0,759.25
Other Costs		£0,446.22	0	£0,446.22
Total Expenditure		£3,121.51	0	£3,121.51
Balance Carried Forward		£534.53	0	£534.53

As a small charity CAN-Abilities does not currently have a policy on holding reserves. As such there are zero (0) funds held in reserve.

There are many uncertainties about the charity continuing. They centre around financial unsustainability. There is a great need for CAN-Abilities Foundation to provide services, however, the charity does not have a dedicated funder or a professional fundraising team. Though we plan to try and recruit a fundraiser, we fear that we may not be able to continue to sustain our activities amidst the increasing demand for our services.



Structure, Governance and Management

CAN-Abilities Foundation is managed by a board of trustees. The method of appointment of trustees is set out in the Constitution of CAN-Abilities Foundation.

Administrative details

CAN-Abilities Foundation's administrative address is 16, Brahms Road, Basingstoke. CAN-Abilities Foundation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The trustees are.

Mrs Claris Nsangli Angafor - Chairperson
Mr Gaston Fornimoh Bezeboh – Treasurer
Mr Gideon Njamngang Angafor - Secretary
Mrs Linda Lum Amungwa – Trustee
Mr Vincent Besong – Trustee

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by Mr G Angafor, secretary to the board of trustees.