

UP Community

England & Wales · Charity number 1196821

Details

Other names	UP AUTISM COMMUNITY
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2021-11-29
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	6 St Peter's Street St. Albans AL1 3LF
Phone	03333391008
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Website	http://upcommunity.org.uk/

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECT OF THE CIO IS:THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT AMONG CHILDREN IN HERTFORDSHIRE WHO ARE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED FROM SOCIETY, OR PARTS OF SOCIETY, AS A RESULT OF AUTISM, RELIEVING THEIR NEEDS AND ASSISTING THEM TO INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY:A) PROVIDING EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES DESIGNED TO SUPPORT AND ENABLE AUTISTIC CHILDREN TO MAXIMISE THEIR POTENTIAL;B) RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES AFFECTING AUTISTIC CHILDREN, BOTH GENERALLY AND IN RELATION TO THEIR SOCIAL EXCLUSION;C) PROVIDING SUPPORT GROUPS, FORUMS, ADVICE, ADVOCACY AND GENERAL SUPPORT FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS.D) PROVIDING RECREATIONAL AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS PROVIDED IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL WELFARE WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE AND DEVELOPING THEIR SKILLS, CAPACITIES AND CAPABILITIES.

Activities: Up Community is a charity passionate in supporting neurodiverse children and their families.We organise social events from sensory play groups to swimming sessions for children and their families.Together creating a supportive community where children can socialise in a safe and no judgemental environment and parents/carers can seek support, friendship and advice.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** LOCAL
- Hertfordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-09-30	£4,786	£1,798	-	-
2023-09-30	£888	£2,408	-	-
2022-09-30	£566	£550	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Marcin Pawel Pajdzik	Chair	2021-08-08
Natalya Leech		2021-08-08
Wai-Thing Pajdzik		2021-08-08

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Accounts and Trustees' Annual Report
(01/10/2023 - 30/09/2024)

UP Community

Charity Number: 1196821

Trustees' Report

About UP Community

Up Community is a small charity based in Hertfordshire. Established in 2021, we are passionate about supporting neurodiverse children and their families. We organise social events such as sensory play groups for children and their families. Our aim is to create a supportive community where children can socialise in a safe and non-judgemental environment and parents or carers can seek support, friendship and advice.

Sensory Play Groups

Up Community's Sensory Play Groups have flourished since their inception. The first session took place in November 2022, at the Maxwell Park Community Centre in Borehamwood, drawing significant interest from the community and attracting 15 families. In a significant and positive development for our community, our Sensory Play Groups have relocated to the Borehamwood Baptist Church, situated at 12 Furzehill Road, Borehamwood, WD6 2DF. This move marks a new chapter for our



charity, providing a fresh and welcoming environment for our activities. The inaugural event at our new home took place on 23 September 2023 and was met with enthusiasm from families. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the leadership and congregation of Borehamwood Baptist Church for their warm reception and for providing us with a wonderful new space to continue our vital work. Families consistently communicate to us that these sessions fill a significant gap in the community, as there are limited alternatives available for them to engage with their children in a safe and understanding environment. We affirm our commitment to continuing organising these events.



Collaboration with Hertsmere Mencap

Fostering partnerships with like-minded organizations is a cornerstone of our strategy to broaden our impact. To that end, we are delighted to announce a new collaboration with Hertsmere Mencap (Registered Charity No. 243871), an organization that is affiliated with the Royal Mencap Society. This partnership commenced in November 2023, and our first joint event was held on 11 November



2023. By joining forces with Hertsmere Mencap, a charity dedicated to supporting individuals with learning disabilities and their families, we aim to create more inclusive and comprehensive support systems for the neurodiverse community in our area.

Fundraising

To cover the expenses of our Sensory Play Groups and sustain our operations, we actively pursue various fundraising avenues. We have raised funds using EasyFundraising (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>), a platform that enables our supporters to raise donations at no additional cost to them while they shop online. We also received voluntary donations from participants of our play groups and funds from two companies: Epitechnic and Velocity Transport. We are very grateful for their support.



We are thrilled to announce that UP Community has been selected as a recipient of the Co-op Local Community Fund.[7] We were notified of this fantastic news by email on November 3, 2023. This grant will provide a significant financial boost, enabling us to continue and expand our Sensory Play Groups throughout 2024. The Co-op Local Community Fund supports projects that make a real difference in local communities, and we are incredibly grateful for their belief in our mission.

Community Engagement and Advocacy

We are profoundly grateful for the continued support of Councillor Dr. Dan Ozarow. His advocacy for our charity has been instrumental in raising our profile within the community. We were honored to be invited by Councillor Ozarow to



Borehamwood's annual parish meeting, where we had the opportunity to deliver a presentation to local residents about our mission and the events we organize. We extend our sincere thanks to Honorata Puciato for representing UP Community and delivering an eloquent and impactful presentation on our work. These opportunities are invaluable in fostering community understanding and support.



The success of our events and the smooth operation of our charity would not be possible without the unwavering dedication of our volunteers. We would like to extend a special thank you to Karlla da Silva for her invaluable assistance in running our events. Her commitment and hard work have been instrumental in creating a positive and supportive atmosphere for the children and families we serve.

Future initiatives

Looking ahead, our primary focus will remain on the development and enhancement of our Sensory Play Groups. We are committed to creating inclusive, stimulating, and supportive environments where neurodiverse children can thrive and their families can connect with one another. We will continue to listen to the needs of our community to ensure our programs are both relevant and impactful.

Accounts

Statement of financial activities (01/10/2023 to 30/09/2024)

Total incoming resources:	£4786.41
Donations via EasyFundraising:	£262.69
Donations from charitable activities:	£176.20
Company donations:	£3450.00
Co-op funding	£600.02
Hertsmere Lottery	£297.50
Total resources expended:	£1798.19
Borehamwood Baptist Church hall hire:	£615.40
Bouncy castle hire:	£680.00
Insurance policy:	£153.44
Virtual office subscription:	£114.00
Other:	£235.35
Payments made to or expenses claimed by staff / trustees:	£0.00
Net incoming / outgoing resources:	£2988.22

Balance sheet (30/09/2024)

Assets:	£3084.45
Cash assets:	£3084.45
Liabilities:	(£2100.00)
Loan from trustees (2021 – 2022) (0% interest):	(£500.00)
Loan from trustees (2022 – 2023) (0% interest):	(£1600.00)
Net Assets:	£984.45
Charity funds brought forward	(2003.77)
Net incoming / outgoing resources for the year	2988.22
Charity funds carried forward:	984.45

Marcin Pajdzik
Chairman
Up Community

UP Community

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Accounts and Trustees' Annual Report
(01/10/2022 - 30/09/2023)

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About UP Community

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Sensory Play Groups

Up Community's Sensory Play Groups have flourished since their inception, with monthly sessions held at the Maxwell Park Community Centre in Borehamwood. We started organising these sessions following the feedback received from the families we engaged with in the previous year. The first session took place in November 2022, drawing significant interest from the community and attracting 15 families. Since then, these sessions have become a regular and highly anticipated occurrence. We



estimate that around 50 children have turned up to these events over the months with a mix of returning families and new participants attending each time. The overwhelming response and positive feedback received from participating families have reinforced the importance of providing such inclusive opportunities. Families consistently communicate to us that these sessions fill a significant gap in the community, as there are limited alternatives available for them to engage with their children in a safe and understanding environment. We affirm our commitment to continuing organising these events.



Second engagement with Borehamwood fire station

Following our successful engagement with the Borehamwood Fire Station last year, we are proud to have been asked to work with the team again this year, assisting them in implementing a "quiet hour" during their annual open day. The quiet hour was specifically designed for inclusivity, and this included families with neurodiverse children. This initiative aims to create a calm and welcoming environment, accommodating individuals with sensory sensitivities and alleviating anxiety, while providing an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the fire station and interact with the incredible firefighters in a supportive setting.



Half term family swim at Aspire Leisure Centre

Building on the success of our previous initiatives, we have organised another private Family Swim session specifically tailored for UP Community families. This event took place at Aspire Leisure Centre in Stanmore in February 2023 providing a fantastic opportunity for families to come together, have fun, and enjoy a fun and inclusive swimming experience. By hosting Family Swim sessions, we aim to provide a space where families can relax, bond, and create lasting memories.



Schopwick Surgery Health and Wellbeing show

UP Community hosted a stall at the Health and Wellbeing event organised by Schopwick Surgery. The event provided us with a platform to engage with a diverse range of attendees. Throughout the day, we had the pleasure of meeting numerous individuals who generously shared their personal stories about how neurodiversity has impacted their lives. Our conversations spanned across a wide spectrum, including parents, carers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbours, friends, and cousins, each connected to someone neurodiverse. This collective experience emphasised the crucial significance of raising awareness and fostering inclusivity within our community. The event served as a reminder that embracing diversity not only enriches our community, but also impacts individuals on a personal level, whether it be within their families, friendships, or professional environments. The vibrant exchanges and heartfelt connections made at the event further reinforced UP Community's dedication to creating a more inclusive society for all.



Online presence

We recognise the importance of building strong connections and effectively communicating with our community. We have leveraged social media to provide updates and engage with families since the inception of the charity. We have now also published the first version of our website created and hosted by a cloud service provider (Epitechnic Ltd) free of charge.

UP on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/up-autism-community>

UP on the Web: <https://upcommunity.org.uk>

Support from the local community.

We are incredibly grateful for the support and assistance of [Councillor Dr Dan Ozarow](#), whose dedication and efforts have greatly benefited Up Community. Councillor Ozarow played a pivotal role in connecting us with funding opportunities and helping navigate the process of applying for funding. Furthermore, his commitment to raising awareness of our charity has played a crucial role in expanding our reach and impact within the



community. Cllr Ozarow also facilitated an affiliation with a local charity, [Gratitude](#), which generously donated toys and materials for our Sensory Play Groups, enhancing the experience for the children and families we serve. We express our heartfelt appreciation to Cllr Ozarow and Gratitude for their contributions and continued support.



We are also grateful for the invaluable contributions of Beata Palinkas to the growth and success of Up Community. Beata played a vital role in assisting the set ups to our Sensory Play Groups, devoting her time and expertise to ensure that these sessions provided a nurturing and inclusive environment for neurodiverse children and their families. Her passion for creating meaningful experiences and fostering connections within the community has been instrumental in the development of our Sensory Play Groups. Additionally, Beata has been a tireless advocate for spreading awareness about Up Community's mission. Her efforts to raise awareness have helped us reach a wider audience, encouraging understanding and support for neurodiverse children. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Beata Palinkas for her exceptional dedication, compassionate spirit, and invaluable contributions.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to [Paul Walker](#) from [Epitechnic Ltd](#) for creating, hosting and maintaining our charity's WordPress website free of charge. Paul's expertise and dedication have been instrumental in bringing our vision to life and establishing an online platform that effectively communicates our mission and initiatives. The website will serve as a vital tool in reaching a wider audience, sharing information, and fostering a sense of community.



Finally, we could not run our Sensory Play Groups without the selfless dedication of our volunteers: Beata Palinkas, Wai Lan Wan, Karlla Da Silva, Honorata Puciato, Ryan Wan, Tyler Wan, Lewis Wan, Claire Withers, Phillipa Zage Williams, Lizzie Hallas and Dalia Lawrence. Their assistance in setting up the play group hall and supporting the events is truly appreciated and helps create a safe and welcoming space for all.

Fundraising

To cover the expenses of our Sensory Play Groups and sustain our operations, we actively pursue various fundraising avenues. We have raised funds using EasyFundraising (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>), a platform that enables our supporters to raise donations at no additional cost to them while they shop online. We also received voluntary donations from participants of our play groups and funds from the Ward Improvement Initiative Scheme. To secure additional funds, we will explore fundraising approaches, such as seeking grants, hosting events, partnering with businesses, and engaging in crowdfunding campaigns. We applied and have now been chosen for the Co-op Local Community Fund that will cover a significant part of the costs of running our Sensory Play Groups in 2024 – 2025.

Charity name change

After careful consideration the charity decided to change its name from Up Autism Community to Up Community. This decision reflects our dedication to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all neurodiverse children and their families, regardless of specific diagnoses. By removing the term "autism" from our name, we aim to ensure that our services are not limited solely to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The resolution was approved by the board on 10/02/2023 and subsequently reported to the Charity Commission.

Future initiatives

Sensory play groups

As we look to the future, Up Community recognises the positive impact of our Sensory Play Groups. These initiatives have resonated deeply within the community, providing invaluable support, connection, and growth for neurodiverse children and their families. Building upon this success, we are committed to sustaining and further developing our Sensory Play Groups as a core focus of our organisation. By continuing to refine and enhance these sessions, we aim to provide an even more inclusive and enriching experience for all.

Engagement with professionals

We will actively engage with professionals who specialise in working with neurodiverse children, with the aim of providing subsidised services such as speech and language, occupational or music therapy. We recognise the value and importance of these interventions in enhancing the well-being and development of neurodiverse children. We have initiated discussions with a speech and language therapist to explore the possibility of organising small group sessions in the near future to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of this support. We also started talking to a music therapist who is interested in working with us in the future.

Website development

With our website now up and running, Up Community is shifting its focus towards creating compelling and informative content. We recognise the significance of providing valuable resources and engaging materials that resonate with our community. Our goal is to ensure that our website becomes a hub of knowledge, support, and inspiration for neurodiverse children and their families.

Public organisations and local events

Following our successful engagement with Borehamwood Fire Station, we will look to extend our support and offer expertise to any organisations seeking to facilitate inclusive events that accommodate neurodiverse children. We are eager to work with other public organisations and the local authorities to implement similar initiatives by providing guidance, resources, and consultancy services to ensure that events are aligned with the needs of neurodiverse children and their families.

Accounts

Statement of financial activities (01/10/2022 to 30/09/2023)

Total incoming resources:	£887.51
Donations via EasyFundraising:	£395.21
Donations from charitable activities:	£217.90
WIS Funding:	£148.90
Hertsmere Lottery	£89.50
Total resources expended:	£2407.55
Community hall hire:	£672.40
Bouncy castle hire:	£475.00
Sensory toys purchase:	£300.94
Insurance Policy (2021 – 2024)	£460.32
Virtual Office Subscription (2022 -2024)	£223.31
Other:	£275.58
Payments made to or expenses claimed by staff / trustees:	£0.00
Net incoming / outgoing resources:	(£1520.04)

Balance sheet (30/09/2023)

Assets:	£96.23
Cash assets:	£96.23
Liabilities:	(£2100.00)
Loan from trustees (2021 – 2022) (0% interest):	(£500.00)
Loan from trustees (2022 – 2023) (0% interest):	(£1600.00)
Net Assets:	(£2003.77)
Charity funds brought forward	(483.73)
Net incoming / outgoing resources for the year	(1520.04)
Charity funds carried forward:	(2003.77)

Marcin Pajdzik
Chairman
Up Community

UP Community

England & Wales - Charity number 1196821

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Accounts and Trustees' Annual Report (29/11/2021 - 30/09/2022)

UP Autism Community

Charity Number: 1196821

Trustees' Report

About UP Autism Community

Up Autism Community is a small charity based in Hertfordshire. Established in 2021, we are passionate about supporting neurodiverse children and their families. We organise social events from sensory play groups to swimming sessions for children and their families. Our aim is to create a supportive community where children can socialise in a safe and no judgemental environment and parents or carers can seek support, friendship and advice.

Organised events and activities

In our inaugural year, the charity dedicated its efforts to exploring a diverse range of events and activities, seeking to identify the specific needs of the local community. Through a series of engaging initiatives, we actively sought feedback from neurodiverse children and their families, striving to understand their preferences and aspirations. By closely listening to the community, we aimed to discover the most suitable forms of support and engagement, ensuring that our future endeavours catered to their unique needs.



In our first year we organised the following activities:

- A trip to Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park,
- A swimming session at Aspire Leisure Centre,
- A trip to Hemel Hempstead DJ's Play Park,
- Trips to various local events (e.g., 'Teddy Bears' picnic' at Lydekker park)
- Parents / carers drop in sessions.

Engagement with local fire station

We are also proud to have offered our free consultancy services to the Borehamwood Fire Station, assisting them in implementing their first "quiet hour" within their annual open day. The quiet hour was specifically designed for inclusivity, and this included families with neurodiverse children. This initiative aims to create a calm and welcoming environment, accommodating individuals with sensory sensitivities and alleviating anxiety, while providing an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the fire station and interact with the incredible firefighters in a supportive setting.



Social media presence

We recognise the importance of building strong connections and effectively communicating with our community. To achieve this, the charity established active social media channels on Facebook and Instagram, providing a platform to engage with our audience and share information about our events and initiatives. Additionally, we created a LinkedIn profile to facilitate future engagement with the business community, fostering potential partnerships and collaborations to further support our mission of empowering neurodiverse children and their families.

UP on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/up-autism-community>

Future initiatives

Sensory play groups

Through the feedback received from the families we engaged with, we have discerned a clear demand for regular Sensory Play Groups. With this understanding, the charity plans to organise monthly sessions in a spacious community hall. These inclusive gatherings will feature an array of stimulating activities, including a bouncy castle and a wide selection of sensory toys, designed to cater specifically to the needs of neurodiverse children. By inviting families from the community, we aim to create a welcoming and supportive environment where children can thrive, and families can forge connections with others who share similar experiences. Considering various expenses such as bouncy castle hire (£75), community hall rental (£60), and refreshments (£15), we estimate the cost to organise one session to be approximately £150.

Fundraising

In order to cover the expenses of our monthly sensory play groups and sustain our operations, the charity will actively pursue various fundraising avenues. We have already registered with EasyFundraising (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>), a platform that enables our supporters to raise donations at no additional cost to them while they shop online. Additionally, we will request participants of our sensory play groups to consider making voluntary donations, contributing towards the continuity and growth of our initiatives. In our commitment to securing additional financial support, we will explore and pursue other creative and strategic fundraising approaches, such as seeking grants, hosting community events, partnering with local businesses, and engaging in crowdfunding campaigns. By diversifying our fundraising efforts, we aim to generate sustainable resources that will enable us to continue providing vital services to neurodiverse children and their families.

Website development

In addition to our active presence on social media platforms, the charity plans to develop a user-friendly and informative website using the popular WordPress platform. With our registered domain, www.upcommunity.org.uk, already in place, this website will serve as a valuable complement to our social media effort as it will provide a centralised hub for

comprehensive information, resources, and updates. By utilizing this platform, we aim to enhance our ability to connect with the community, share success stories, and raise awareness about the unique needs of neurodiverse children and their families. We are fortunate to have secured cloud email services through a generous cloud service provider, free of charge and we hope to explore the possibility of hosting our website with the same provider.

Public organisations and local events

Following our successful engagement with Borehamwood Fire Station, we will look to extend our support and offer expertise to any organisations seeking to organise inclusive events that accommodate neurodiverse children. We are eager to work with other public organisations and the local authorities to implement similar initiatives by providing guidance, resources, and consultancy services to ensure that events are aligned with the needs of neurodiverse children and their families.

Engagement with professionals

We will actively seek to engage with professionals who specialise in working with neurodiverse children, with the aim of exploring the feasibility of providing subsidised services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and music therapy. We recognise the immense value and importance of these interventions in enhancing the well-being and development of neurodiverse children. By collaborating with skilled professionals in the field, we aim to make these vital services more accessible and affordable to families who may face financial barriers.

Charity name change

After careful consideration Up Autism Community has decided to change its name to Up Community. This decision reflects our dedication to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all neurodiverse children and their families, regardless of specific diagnoses. By removing the term "autism" from our name, we aim to eliminate any potential negative connotations associated with the word and ensure that our services are not limited solely to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Once formalised, the change will be reported to Charity Commission.

Accounts

Revenue up to 30/09/2022:	£566.00
Loan from trustees (0% interest):	£500.00
Donations from supporters:	£66.00
Expenses up to 30/09/2022:	£549.73
Administrative costs:	£29.95
Transport:	£378.20
Booking / entrance fees:	£118.00
Other costs:	£23.58
Payments to staff / trustees:	£0.00
Expenses claimed by staff / trustees:	£0.00
Balance on 30/09/2022:	£16.27

Marcin Pajdzik
Chairman
Up Autism Community

