

Autistic Parents UK

Registered Charity number: 1198909

Trustees Report and Financial Statement for the period from 11/05/2022 until 31/05/2023

Reference and administrative details	Page 2
Trustees report	Pages 3-9
Independent examiners report	Page 10
Statement of financial activities	Pages 11-12
Balance Sheet	Page 13
Notes to the financial statement	Pages 14-17

Autistic Parents UK
Charity Reference and Administrative Details
For the period from 11/05/2022 until 31/05/2023

Legal and Administrative Information

Autistic Parents UK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which was incorporated on 11/05/2022. This first financial period encompasses the year from 11/05/2022 to 31/05/2023.

Full Name	Autistic Parents UK
Registered Company Number	CE028778
Registered Charity Number	1198909
Trustees	Jenni McCabe Hannah Elizabeth Eden Julie Sharples Kieran Rose Ayesha Pusey Simone Smit Shona Davison
Principal Address	Office 1, Izabella House 24 - 26 Regent Place Birmingham B1 3NJ
Independent Examiner	Boyd's Accountants Britannia Court, 5 Moor Street, Worcester. WR1 3DB

Trustee selection methods

The initial trustee selection process was based on approaching individuals with personal, academic and professional experience within the field of Autistic Parenthood and working across various levels with Autistic individuals.

New trustees were given adequate training in respect of their legal obligations under charity law, in particular in relation to the Charity Commission Guidance on Public Benefit, the charity constitution and the trustees decision making processes. It was confirmed that there were no other barriers to the selection of the initial trustees. We sought out consultancy advice from the Charity Commission. The trustees will be reviewed at the annual AGM, when it will also be determined how long the positions will be held for and trustees will be voted for by the members.

Objectives and Activities

Purposes of the charity

Autistic Parents UK is an Autistic-led Charity (CIO) committed to supporting Autistic parents in several ways. The promotion of social inclusion among parents in the UK who are socially excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of being Autistic and assisting them to integrate into society, in particular but not exclusively by:

- a) providing education, information and opportunities to support and enable Autistic parents to maximise their potential
- b) by advocating for Autistic parents generally and in relation to their social exclusion and providing information about the experiences of Autistic parents, in particular to healthcare professionals and other service providers to improve the experience and inclusion of Autistic parents.

The promotion and protection of the physical and mental health of Autistic parents in the UK through the provision of support groups, forums, advice, information, advocacy and general support for Autistic parents, their families, friends and professionals that they come into contact with.

Main activities

Autistic Parents UK supports Autistic parents in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

1. online peer support group
2. large group forum (450+ participants)
3. small group support for more in-depth discussion (volunteer-led group of around 5 - 10 participants)
4. monthly educational webinars (fully funded for Autistic parents) with well-known guest speakers and experts in the field
5. monthly live Q&A sessions with our volunteer team and well-known Autistic advocates and educators
6. monthly book giveaways
7. local peer support groups (online and in-person)
8. advocacy - supporting parents with health care professionals, educational institutions, local authorities etc.
9. parent-centred training including:

- a) perinatal education & breastfeeding support
- b) education on managing parenthood at any stage
- 10. professional training, consultancy and supervision, to promote understanding and acceptance of Autistic parents leading to improved outcomes for physical and mental wellbeing.
- 11. regularly publishing articles of relevance which include accounts of lived experience for both Autistic parents and those who support them creating guides on accessing and navigating healthcare, including maternity services
- 12. Contributing to research and external resource programmes

Contribution made by volunteers

Autistic Parents UK (APUK) is a user-led and voluntary-led organisation, with 1 paid member of staff. Volunteers are crucial to the running of APUK and the charity relies on volunteers for governance, writing blogs and website resources, raising funds, contributing to the peer support forums and groups, one to one peer support, assisting with webinars, and supporting the charity with awareness expansion and outreach. Thank you to all the volunteers that have supported us in our first year.

Public Benefits

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

1. THE VALUE OF PEER SUPPORT

There is a lack of support for Autistic adults who do not have Intellectual Disabilities. In peer support groups, Autistic adults are given a sense of empowerment through shared experiences (Crane *et al.*, 2021). Autistic people who engage with peers have been found to experience self-compassion and increased agency and autonomy, which in turn results in increased resilience (Crompton *et al.*, 2020; Leedham *et al.*, 2019). Autistic Parents UK provides user-led service meaning that we are able to listen, empathise, support, create and hold a safe space and signpost where appropriate, improving mental health and quality of life for Autistic parents. Peer support provides an opportunity to learn from shared experiences of others, gaining knowledge, coping skills and practical strategies alongside emotional support (Repper & Carter, 2011).

2. PROMOTION OF POSITIVE AUTISTIC IDENTITY

Autistic Parents UK views Autism as a neurotype, a social, cognitive and sensory difference from that of the majority of the population, not an impairment, condition or disorder. Autistic Parents UK acknowledges the challenges faced by many Autistic people, though we do not view Autism alone as a cause for distress. Autistic people who have a positive identity, community, and affiliation with other Autistic people have been shown to have lower scores on outcomes measures related to depression and anxiety (Cage *et al.*, 2018, Cooper *et al.*, 2017). They also

experience greater self-esteem and well-being. Connecting with people of the same neurotype can be very validating and can support individuals in embracing strengths rather than highlighting differences as a deficit.

3. IMPROVED WELL-BEING FOR THE PARENT, CHILD, FAMILY & WIDER COMMUNITY

Being an Autistic parent may bring unique challenges and strengths to the role. Autistic people experience their environments in a way that can mean sensory hypersensitivity which can lead to avoidance of sudden, loud or discordant sounds; strong smells; bright lights; tactile demands; etc. In the context of a busy family home, this can lead to sensory overload, distress and anxiety (Gardner *et al.*, 2016; Lever & Geurts, 2016). This is a prevalent feature for Autistic mothers during childbirth and the perinatal period. If unsupported parent experience can cause a negative impact on their children or families. Supporting Autistic parents will also improve the well-being of their children, reducing the likelihood of them experiencing trauma themselves and developing co-dependent relationships (Murphy, 2021). Autistic children will especially benefit from having a well-supported parent with a positive Autistic Identity, learning the power of good support and becoming empowered to self-advocate.

4 - IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Several studies have found that Autistic parents experience significant difficulties regarding effective communication with professionals (when advocating for their children), as well as in healthcare settings, such as during pregnancy and childbirth (Gullon-Scott & Bass, 2018). Through offering education and professional supervision, Autistic Parents UK can positively impact relationships between Autistic parents and the professionals with whom they come into contact. As relationships between Autistic parents and professionals improve there will be increased opportunity for co-production in the design and delivery of services which will lead to improved support for Autistic people (Manyema *et al.*, 2018). As Autistic people have more successful interactions with professionals, they will be more likely and able to access services. APUK also contributes to new research across professional and health services.

Financial review

Income and Expenditure

Income was £27,086.99 for the financial period and expenditure was £6,828.22. The unrestricted funds received were in surplus by £11,649.37 and the restricted funds held at the period end were £8,609.40. The restricted funds are reserved for the peer support project. The outstanding debtors amount on 31/05/2023 were £2500.

Reserves policy

The trustees decided that our reserves should cover at least 12 months running costs (currently based on the first year's unrestricted running costs) and are aiming to set aside half of unrestricted income until the amount of reserve has been achieved. In the first financial year, the total outgoings were £6,828.22, though the portion of this linked to official running costs for the first financial year were £1,143.41. As of 31/05/2023, APUK had £1,143.41 allocated as a reserve. This will be reviewed in the first Trustee Meeting after the completion of accounts and revised in accordance with projections. The charity is in a financially healthy position for its first year and there are currently no concerns about the charity continuing as a going concern.

Principal sources of funding

The principal sources of funding are surplus from our NHS training, donations and webinars and grants that are given for a particular project. The primary grant provided in this reporting year is from the National Lottery for the Peer Support Provision project.

Risk management

The main risks of our activities are:

Funding: Insufficient Funding

Regulatory: Breach of Volunteer Law, DBS checks, Management of complaints

Risks to beneficiaries or volunteers: Identification of physical or mental health risk of beneficiaries or volunteers, Identification of discrimination

Lack of Resources: Insufficient trained staff to work to a high standard and provide quality services, Insufficient resources to undertake or continue project work

Service provision: Risk of service provision, Risk of safeguarding protocol not being implemented, Regular training, Increased demand, Management of peer support volunteers

IT: Data loss and protection, Inadvertent Data Breach, Malicious Data Breach, Cyber Attack

Physical: Personal Injury/Accident, Abuse of a Volunteer

Risk Management processes:

Effective risk management processes enable Autistic Parents UK to identify areas of risk and strategies to mitigate these. This is a documented approach throughout the charity's projects and ensures all trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of how risks are escalated, updated, and resolved. These processes are regularly reviewed in trustee meetings and verified annually before the AGM in line with review of all the charity's policies.

Evidence of safeguarding is a requirement for the Charity Commission. Safeguarding training is essential for all trustees, staff and volunteers. The core risks lie within personal engagement. Peer support differs from other forms of health services and supports in important ways. Crucially, the people involved play an active role in creating a safe environment for each other, to give and receive support from each other. Peers make choices about what parts of their personal experiences they talk about, seek support for, and use to support other people. Detailed training is provided, and agreements are issued in terms of confidentiality, honest communication, mutual respect and respectable conduct.

Regular supervision and monitoring play an important role, as feeling safe within peer support is vital. Some peer supporters may have difficulty asking for support when they need it leading to feeling burnt out and unsupported. Additionally, there may be a risk of distress or anxiety in relation to sharing/listening to difficult experiences. Detailed distress protocols are included in the training of all supporters and clear support pathways are identified both throughout training and ongoing supervision. Safeguarding approaches are in place in case of dealing with the risk of self-harm, injury, risk of suicide or harm to someone else. There is also access to support for debriefing after sessions in which difficult issues are discussed and direct contact to review their assessment of the risk.

Achievements and Performance

Achievements

Throughout the year, we have effectively supported Autistic Parents through the provision of our online peer support groups. Larger groups are accommodated in Discord, online small groups over Zoom and at specific locations, in-person group peer support is provided. This outreach is growing significantly, and training is being implemented to grow this provision.
<https://www.autisticparentsuk.org/resources-for-parents>.

We have provided high quality monthly educational webinars on relevant topics with professional and highly experienced speakers: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/autistic-parents-uk-33262348917>

We have completed regular live Q&A sessions with our volunteer team and well-known Autistic advocates and educators:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXbHCgL8l2Uy_IICV6UkJfw

Our monthly book giveaways receive a significant amount of interest and assists with providing resources on Autistic Parenthood and positive Autistic identity:
<https://www.autisticparentsuk.org/giveaways>

Throughout the year, we have supported parents with advocacy in relation to health care professionals, educational institutions, local authorities etc.

Professional training and consultancy have been provided to:

- a) Autistic focused charities (e.g. Autism West Midlands)
- b) Parent focused charities (e.g. Touchstone)
- c) Educational settings (e.g. Fig Tree Day Nursery)
- d) NHS services (e.g. East Sussex Health Care NHS Trust)

We have regularly published articles and blogs of relevance:

<https://www.autisticparentsuk.org/blog>

We have increased our library resource of downloadable resources:

<https://www.autisticparentsuk.org/downloadable-resources>

We have supported relevant participatory and inclusive research and publish both Research Opportunities and Requests:

<https://www.autisticparentsuk.org/research>

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature	
-----------	---

Full name	Jenni McCabe
-----------	--------------

Position	Chair
----------	-------

Date	01/07/2023
------	------------

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31/05/2023 which are set out on pages 3 to 9.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
 - the accounts do not accord with those records; or
 - the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination;
- I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner name: D Chandler

Company: Boyds Accountants

Signature:



Date: 20 June 2023

Autistic Parents UK

For the period from 11/05/2022 until 31/05/2023

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income & expenditure account)

Split by Unrestricted funds /restricted funds Total

Income

Restricted Income from National Lottery grant	£
	9,989.00
Unrestricted Income from donations (Incl. initial £545.18 donation from community group)	£
	1,208.21
Unrestricted Income from activities	£
	15,889.78
Total Income	<u>£</u>
	<u>27,086.99</u>

Expenditure

Expenditure restricted funds	£
	(1,379.60)
Expenditure unrestricted funds	£
	(5,448.62)
Total expenditure	<u>£</u>
	<u>(6,828.22)</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>£17,758.7</u>
	<u>7</u>
Fund balances at 31/05/23	<u>£17,758.7</u>
	<u>7</u>

Autistic Parents UK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING AN INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

FOR THE YEAR START OF INCORPORATION 11 MAY 2022 TO 31 May 2023

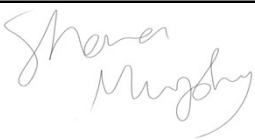
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Income					
Income from donations and grants	2	1208	9989		11197
Charitable activities	2	15890			15889
Total income		17097	9989		27086
Expenditure					
Raising funds	3	0			0
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	5449	1380		6828
Total expenditure		5448	1380		6828
Net income		11649	8609		20258
- Debtors		-2500			-2500
Fund balances brought forward	6	0	0	0	-
Fund balances carried forward	6	9149	8609		17758

Autistic Parents UK
Balance Sheet
For the period from 11/05/2022 until 31/05/2023

Balance Sheet

	2022-23 £
Balance brought forward	0.00
Current Assets	
Debtors	0.00
Cash at bank	17,758.77
Current liabilities	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	0.00
Net Assets	<u>17,758.77</u>
Funds	
Brought forward	0.00
Unrestricted funds	8,609.40
Restricted funds	9,149.37
Total funds end of tax year	<u>17,758.77</u>

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the charities Act 2011 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for the issue at the Annual General Meeting and were signed on their behalf.

Signature	
Full name and position	Shona Murphy, Treasurer and Trustee
Date	01/07/2023

Notes to the financial statements

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. 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 on 16 July 2014 (as updated through Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented 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.

1.2 Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The trustees have successfully obtained funding for the next year, and are actively seeking new sources of income, in order to fund the charity in the long term.

1.3 Income

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.

1.4 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis, including value added tax, and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

1.5 Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are either:-

Unrestricted funds

These consist of funds which the charity may use in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds

These funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity.

Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or grant provider, or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

1.6 Volunteers

The trustees recognise the significant contribution made by volunteers who gave freely of their time. It is not practicable to place a value on this contribution.

2. Income for 2022-23

Restricted grants £9,989

Unrestricted Donations £1,208

Charitable activities £13,389.78

(£2500 not received 31/05/2023)

The restricted grant of £9,989 is from the National Lottery. The unrestricted donations include a transfer donation from the community group, which was the structure of the charity prior to incorporation on 11 May 2022 and small personal donations.

Included within charitable activities is unrestricted income of £13,389.78 for the full 2022-23 year, primarily from webinar income and training sessions. Included within charitable activities is restricted income of £nil.

3. Expenditure

Expenditure by category

£859.02	Administrative costs
£77.57	Book giveaways
£488.58	Insurance
£512.20	Professional fees/services
£1879.60	salaries
£1617.50	Trainer fees
£543	Training for our staff/vols

£850.75	Webinar speaker fees
£6828.22	Total expenditure for 2022-23

4. Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year: £2500

5. Creditors:

Amounts falling due within one year: Nil

6. Movement in funds

Restricted Funds - National Lottery

Incoming resources	£9989
Resources expended:	(£13 80)
Closing balance:	£8609

Unrestricted Funds

General fund opening balance	£0
Incoming resources	£1709 8
Resources expended:	(£544 9)
Closing balance:	£1164 9
Debtors	(£250 0)

7. Analysis of net assets: 17,758

8 Staff costs and numbers

Gross wages for the year 2022-23 amounted to £1,879.60, partially linked to the restricted National Lottery funds (20 hours a month for Employee 1 and 5 hours a month for Employee 2 were linked to restricted projects).

9. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

No expenses were reimbursed to the trustees during the year.

10. Independent examiner remuneration

Fees payable to the charity's independent examiner for 2022-23: Nil.

11. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

12. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the reporting year or comparative period that require disclosure.