

National Autistic Society

Annual report 2024-2025

Creating a society that works for autistic people

NATIONAL AUTISTIC SOCIETY YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Our impact in 2024-25

The role of the National Autistic Society is to:

1. Support all autistic individuals and their families to live a fulfilled life on their terms.

Through expert advice and guidance, we reached over 1.3 million people, providing essential support to autistic people and their families when it mattered most.

Our adult services made a real difference to over 400 autistic people, helping them build a better quality of life through our specialist person-centred residential services and centres across the UK.

Our Online Community provided a safe space for 869,000 autistic people and their families to share experiences and be heard.

Our Diagnostic and Assessment Service assessed 220 people and provided advice on the diagnosis process to over 5,000 people.

In Scotland, our Growing Up, Embrace Autism, Moving Forward and other support programmes helped 601 autistic people.

In Wales, 400 autistic people benefited from our peer support groups, having the opportunity to meet others in a safe environment where they can be themselves.

In Northern Ireland, we supported 966 people from our Belfast Centre with a mix of daytime activities, family support and a lending library.

In England, 706 parents were supported by our Parent to Parent Service, enabling them to talk to other parents who understand.

2. Influence and collaborate with others to improve standards and adjustments.

Almost 500 autistic children received specialist education in our schools and Cullum Centres – with spaces built around their needs and potential.

We delivered vital autism training to 15,500+ professionals and partnered with 674 organisations, creating ripple effects of awareness and empathy across services.

91,000 education professionals were trained by the Autism Education Trust to be better equipped to support autistic students – making classrooms more inclusive nationwide. Over 100 organisations earned our Autism Accreditation Award, raising the standard of care and understanding across the UK.

3. Transform society by building understanding, acceptance and respect for all autistic people.

8,238 autistic people and families told us what they want the public to know about autism, laying the foundations for our *It's How You Show Up* public awareness campaign.

Over 3,000 passionate campaigners emailed their MPs after our *Constant fight* report – demanding change and opening the doors to political conversations that matter.

Together, we changed the law. After years of tireless campaigning, the *Mental Health Bill* passed through the House of Lords, protecting autistic people from being detained simply because of their diagnosis.

Our Young Ambassadors used artwork and poetry to campaign on health inequalities, inspiring 2,460 campaigners to sign their letter to Wes Streeting.

We challenged 14 media outlets for poor coverage or misinformation about autism.

Over 90,000 supporters engaged with our social media posts that focused on fighting for autistic people's rights.

Introduction from our Chief Executive and Chair of the Board of Trustees

It has been another crucial year in our fight to create a society that works for autistic people and their families. We are immensely proud to reflect on the success and impact we have had in the second year of our Vision to Reality strategy.

Despite progress, this has been a challenging year for autistic people. An increase in negative media coverage has led to the spread of harmful misinformation in public conversations about autism. We will challenge these narratives wherever we see them.

As the Government reforms several important routes to support, we are campaigning hard to improve a failing special educational needs (SEND) system, and safeguard vital benefits for those who rely on them to live happy, comfortable and empowered lives. Our Policy and Campaigns teams will keep fighting for the rights of autistic people; work that is more critical now than ever.

Despite economic pressures and a difficult year for the charity sector, we have seen extraordinary support from our community. Thanks to the unwavering commitment of our dedicated supporters, we have raised millions of pounds so we can continue to fight for autistic people and their families - an incredible achievement that comes at a time when it is needed most. We're also extremely grateful to have secured funding to begin the build of a new state-of-the-art Autism Centre in Randalstown, Northern Ireland, and proud to have supported over 1.3 million people with our flagship advice and guidance services. The generosity of our supporters enables us to make our Vision to Reality strategy possible. Thank you for your support.

We ended our year putting the final touches to our archive; an important part of our heritage. Through funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund 2023, 'In our Words' is now available on our website. We do hope you'll join us on reflecting on the pivotal milestones in history that brought our charity and society to where we are today.

There is much work still to be done, and as we look forward to the year ahead, we are grateful and honoured to have you on this journey with us; to create a society that truly works for autistic people.

Caroline Stevens
Chief Executive

Dr Stephen Ladyman
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Strategic report

Part one: Our achievements in 2024-25

Support

We believe the role of the National Autistic Society is to support all autistic individuals and their families to live a fulfilled life on their terms.

Throughout the year, our adult services, website, diagnosis service and local branches and groups continued to provide life-changing support for autistic people and their families. Here are just a few of the highlights.

Transforming lives through our adult services

Our adult services made a real difference to over 400 autistic people, helping them build a better quality of life through our specialist person-centred residential services and centres across the UK.

Kingsley House in Bideford underwent significant refurbishment after substantial investment from the charity. As a result, this enabled two people to move there from Somerset Court. All 12 individuals who live at Kingsley House now have bespoke, person-centred environments to live in that meet their holistic needs.

A number of other properties across adult services have received investment, with the aim of ensuring that the people we support have homes that are safe, comfortable and tailored to meet their individual needs, promoting independence, dignity and a better quality of life.

New diagnosis and employment information hubs

In 2024-25, we launched two new hubs of autism information on our website, focusing on diagnosis and employment. We followed our robust content process to ensure autistic people, families and supporters have access to the most accurate and up-to-date information from research, professional practice and lived experience.

Our new diagnosis hub launched in July 2024 and included 13 new webpages and practical resources such as template letters. One month after launch, the hub saw a 45% increase in views and a 36% increase in users. Visitors reported greater satisfaction with the quality, accuracy and range of information.

- "Your website is absolutely amazing and has so much information and knowledge which has helped me tremendously, so thank you so much for this."
- "It's helpful to know this as my youngest daughter has been waiting for her autism assessment for two years. Every day is an emotional rollercoaster."

We launched our employment hub in January 2025. Users reported their plans to use the new content to support them in their existing role, support others in finding work and to discuss reasonable adjustments with their employer. The accompanying video: *A job that works for me: Lee, autistic Fire Safety Inspector* also received great feedback:

- "Thank you for sharing your story. My son is autistic, and you can be a good example to him to not quit on his dream of a firefighter career."

Improving navigation on our advice and guidance webpages

Our advice and guidance webpages had 1,100,000 users in 2024-25. To improve navigation, we changed our landing page to provide a clear structure of topics, with our most visited sections at the top. We also started the development of a navigation tool that uses advanced web technology to help users find the most relevant content for them, which we hope to launch later in 2025.

Enhancing our Online Community

In 2024-25, our Online Community had 869,000 active users:

- "It's great to have positive and life-affirming conversations. It's also amazing that people are so open about their struggles as autistic people (and as human beings generally too of course!) and I want to thank everyone because you never know how much you're helping people by simply sharing your stories."
- "I don't know where I would be without you all! This is the autism community! We should all be here to support each other."

We migrated the Community to a new platform in October 2024 to increase our capabilities, and put significant work into ensuring compliance with the *Online Safety Act* to protect children and adults online.

Revamping our Autism Services Directory

Our revamped Autism Services Directory launched in December 2024, offering:

- improved user experience and design
- improved functionality for services, including self-service
- a new review and screening system for services
- new features such as the map of services to provide an enhanced user experience.

It had 228,600 users over the year.

Developing our one-to-one advice and guidance

While we are working on developing a new service that complements the navigation tool on our website, and provides help to those who need more support and/or reasonable adjustments, we responded to 1,717 advice and guidance enquiries.

Parents could speak to parent volunteers using our **Parent to Parent service**, which supported 706 parents in 2024-25. Volunteers offer a listening ear, empathy and an opportunity to discuss feelings and experiences:

- “Thank you for holding space with me. I truly came away from our conversation feeling empowered.”
- “It was lovely to speak to another mum who had been in the same position.”

The service and its volunteers were recognised by the Helplines Partnership, which awarded Volunteer of the Year 2024 to one of our longstanding volunteers.

Our **Autism Support Plus programme**, providing tailored support to families supported by partner organisations, delivered 272 advisory calls. The 2025 Charity Awards shortlisted the programme for a prestigious award in the Disability category.

Our **Autism Inpatient Mental Health Casework service** supported 80 new cases prior to closure in October 2024.

Supporting families via Autism Central

Autism Central is a peer education programme, commissioned by NHS England and run by a consortium of charities and hosted by the National Autistic Society. Launched in spring 2023, it aims to increase access to support, learning and resources for families, carers and personal assistants of autistic children and adults.

The programme delivered wide-reaching peer education and coaching throughout 2024-25:

- 237 peer educators employed
- 1,549 group sessions delivered
- 8,528 one-to-one coaching sessions provided
- over 5,700 families/carers registered on the website.
- “It’s been really helpful and reassuring to finally talk to someone who gets it.” Feedback from a parent

Building the capacity of our diagnostic service

We made substantial progress this year in increasing diagnostic and assessment capacity. There are now three independent service providers that have been closely vetted by us working in partnership with our service, and all are based outside London.

Over the year, the team delivered:

- 219 enhanced diagnostic assessment packages for children, young people and adults
- 77 referrals triaged through the Autism Support Plus* offer
- 54 clinical consultations under the Autism Support Plus* offer
- 44 post-diagnostic adult coaching sessions.

*Through this offer, employees of subscribing organisations have access to initial consultations and, where appropriate, full assessments funded by their employer.

A vibrant branch network offering local and online support

Our branch network continues to demonstrate remarkable strength and commitment, with 82 active branches supported by over 750 dedicated volunteers. These volunteers serve as the backbone of our organisation, consistently developing innovative and dynamic approaches to extend support services to underserved communities.

Four new branches are preparing to launch across England, Wales and Scotland. Furthermore, there is more collaboration between existing branches, with numerous partnerships forming between neighbouring locations to help us in our aim to reach the entire country.

Our online branches have experienced significant growth and engagement. Specialised digital communities, including our LGBTQ+ support group, book club, running club, and arts and crafts group, have established themselves as vibrant, active communities. These online branches have fostered meaningful connections with our traditional branch network, actively sharing their experiences and extending invitations to participate in cross-platform activities, thereby strengthening the overall cohesion of our community network.

A particular highlight this year was our North Northumberland Branch volunteers receiving the King's Award for Voluntary Service. This prestigious award is equivalent to an MBE and is the highest award given to local voluntary groups in the UK.



Wide-ranging family support at our Resource Centre

Across our Family Support Services in Croydon, Surrey, Tower Hamlets, Southwark and Lambeth, we:

- received 3,551 referrals
- provided 19,335 hours of support (including one-to-one and group-based support).

"Each session, I took home a valuable lesson that I was able to apply to my daily life, helping me better manage my child's behaviour, sensory needs, and transitions to new places. This has made things easier for both me and my family. I now feel more confident in my child and in myself. I've noticed that I experience less mum guilt and feel much more assured when handling situations at home and in public."

Life-changing support in Northern Ireland

Our state-of-the-art Autism Centre in Belfast continued to be a lifeline to local families. Offering a mix of daytime activities, family support and a lending library, the centre supported 966 individuals.

This included James, who used our Afternoon Club:

"My son James has been attending the youth club at Carryduff for four years now. From the very first day, I have found the organisers and staff to be professional, caring, attentive and engaging, and James has always been happy and excited to go. There are so many places and situations that can be overwhelming, overstimulating and often frightening for an autistic child, which leads to a very isolated life. I couldn't be more grateful to Clair and all the staff at Carryduff for all the love, care, compassion and understanding they show James, he truly loves his time there. As his Mum, it's the best thing in the world to know that your child is safe, cared for and having fun in an environment tailored to meet his needs." James' Mum

In our last annual report, we said that in 2024-25, we would train other organisations in our Skills for Life programme so that autistic young people across Northern Ireland have opportunities to develop skills for independence. Having consulted our young

person's steering group on the Skills for Life manual, we have instigated changes on their advice, and will be rolling out our training in 2025-26.

We also planned to expand the number of parent support branches in Northern Ireland. A branch officer has been recruited and will lead on this work in 2025-26.

Building our new Autism Centre in Randalstown

We are delighted with the progress of building our new Autism Centre in Randalstown. In July 2025, we will kit out the garden and bespoke sensory spaces. At the core of the centre will be day provision for adults with high support needs.

Transforming lives in Scotland

Our range of support programmes in Scotland had a huge impact on autistic people and their families.

We directly supported more than 120 adults via our **Embrace Autism** programme with pre- and post-diagnostic support.

The second cohort for our **Connections** programme, aimed at tackling loneliness and isolation of autistic adults, started in August 2024 with 60 members:

- "I have been to places I would never have gone, due to having no one to go with. Being able to speak to people about the frustrations of being female, autistic and menopausal helps me to cope with the rest of the week in a calmer manner."
- **Mentoring for Autistic Adults Programme (MAAP):** There have been 43 mentoring matches this year.
- Through our **Growing Up** programme, we provided vital support to 127 parents and carers whose children are approaching the transition to adulthood.
- **Empower Up** has seen 47 young people supported, and we had the go-ahead to deliver an additional group in North Lanarkshire.
 - "I was so grateful that my son got a place on Empower Up. He is much more independent and able to problem solve and take responsibility. He logged in to meetings without me having to set it up and be with him and took a pride in doing this independently. It was a calm time in his week where there was no pressure on him. This helped keep him calmer, which made our house a calmer place to be."
- **Social groups** We have reached an average 129 autistic people every fortnight, supported by a team of 33 amazing volunteers who between them have delivered over 771 hours of support.
- Our **Autism Support Ayrshire** service responded to 815 enquiries from individuals and families, as well as delivering parent carer workshops, a social group and coffee club for autistic adults.

Moving Forward

Through our **Moving Forward** programme, funded via Cashback for Communities, we have provided personalised one-to-one support to 60 young autistic people from

disadvantaged backgrounds:

- 86% of parents and professionals reported improvements in young people's confidence, mental health and wellbeing.
- "I am less anxious now, and I dread school less"

Tackling loneliness in Wales

Our Welsh Peer Support initiative, launched in 2020, aims to increase the availability of peer support social groups for autistic adults across Wales. This year, we have added 14 groups, and the project is now supporting more than 400 people. We have received another year's funding from the Welsh government for this important project.

2025-26 plans

In our adult services, we plan to:

- reduce agency use and increase the number of people permanently recruited
- create a clear line of accountability for service performance through improved leadership oversight
- strengthen the Business Development team structure, ensuring there are clearly defined specialist roles
- develop a clear costing framework for all new business.

Our Autism Help team plan to:

- continue to ensure our advice and guidance is informed by lived experience, including ongoing consultation with our steering group
- update our What is autism webpages and core materials
- launch a new education hub of information and resources
- develop and launch Ask Ash – an interactive digital tool to help people navigate our autism information and services and to direct those most in need to bespoke one-to-one support
- ensure that our Online Community is a safe and welcoming forum and fully complies with online safety legislation
- improve the Autism Services Directory experience for autistic people, families and service providers, and increase the services listed.

In Branches, we plan to:

- invest in our Branches and Volunteering functions to provide us with the capacity within the team to meet our objective in the Vision to Reality strategy to grow our support for our volunteer-led branches. Ultimately, we want every autistic person and their family to be able to access a branch or online branch, should they wish.

In Scotland, we plan to:

- deliver 'What's next?' - pre- and post-diagnostic support for more than 500 adults over two and a half years, starting from October 2025. Funded by Inspiring Scotland, the programme aims to empower autistic people by deepening their understanding of autism and autistic identity, improving wellbeing and fostering peer connections
- deliver our Empower Up programme for autistic children and young people to a further 45 young people and evaluate it to improve and grow our support offering
- conclude our Mentoring for Autistic Adults programme in autumn 2025, meeting its target of 60 matches by the end of the funding
- conclude our Growing Up programme in autumn 2025, reaching its target of supporting 135 carers whose sons or daughters are approaching the transition to adulthood. We will bid for future funding to continue the programme
- run our Moving Forward programme until the end of March 2026, and meet our target to deliver support to 180 autistic children and young people from disadvantaged parts of Scotland.

Influence

We believe the role of the National Autistic Society is to influence and collaborate with others to improve standards and adjustments.

Our vision of an autism-friendly future is a vision for the whole of society. This means we can't achieve it alone. Here's how we influenced and collaborated with others this year, including professionals in healthcare and education, employers and other groups and charities.

Empowering professionals to provide better support

Our 'Autism Know How' department brings together all our products and services aimed at improving autism practice among professionals and organisations. In 2024-25:

- 15,574 delegates were trained
- 13,415 people accessed our online training modules
- 99.1% of delegates said they would recommend our training.

We launched our **new Autism Inclusive Employer Award** in April 2024, with a week-long takeover of our social media channels. Currently, we have four employers signed up for the award. We also featured case studies of inclusive employers in our *It's How You Show Up* campaign and when launching our new employment web pages.

Over 100 organisations earned our **Autism Accreditation Award** in 2024-25, raising the standard of care and understanding across the UK.

- "We have found the process of accreditation very supportive and an effective tool in driving the development of our provision. The knowledge and expertise of our advisor has been key, and he has built positive relationships with staff and pupils, which enables the process to be collaborative and supportive."

Ongoing interest by health practitioners to improve their support to autistic patients has seen a steady increase in hospitals joining our **Inclusion Award**, with 26 sites either working towards or having achieved accreditation.

The Autism Friendly Award saw successful applications from museums, transport providers, vets, holiday accommodation and other visitor attractions:

- "The award application process helped us consolidate resources specifically designed to benefit autistic visitors." Feedback from award participant

Autism Know How continued to grow and develop its offer through targeted investment in evaluation, digital development and product innovation. Key developments included: the launch of a new learning management system to support the growth of e-learning products; updates of the key understanding autism e-courses; an external impact evaluation to test methods of capturing the impact of

our training on the lives of autistic people; re-writes of our EarlyBird suite of post-diagnostic family support programmes; and a toolkit to target the corporate markets with our training, consultancy and best practice frameworks.

Developing our Cullum Centres in mainstream schools

After 10 years of the Cullum Centre project, we have taken some time to reflect on the changing landscape of education and how this may impact on the project overall. This has been undertaken alongside the Cullum Family Trust, and updated ways of working have been agreed to ensure the continued success of the project. Presently, we are working with three new potential centre sites in Norfolk and East Sussex with the hope that builds can start by 2026.

From the findings of the Cullum Centre evaluation, and increasing need within mainstream schools, this year saw the start to an Inclusive Spaces concept and pilot within a school in Bath. This supports mainstream schools to develop inclusive learning environments and the teaching staff to increase their autism knowledge and embed practice to support autistic pupils to have a more positive educational experience.

Fostering a love for learning in our schools

In our four schools, we have shaped our schools' curricula with innovative and unique approaches. Our success in all Ofsted inspections demonstrates the improvements we have made, and continue to make, that engage autistic young people in a love for learning.

We have made great strides in recognising the people who work so hard for our pupils, introducing better, fairer and more transparent school pay scales for teachers and therapy staff.

Innovative and forward-thinking practice continues to be a feature of our schools as we celebrate the success of our academic partnerships. Links with academic studies and corporate partners have secured the success of exciting projects such as a virtual reality programme in conjunction with UCL computer science, Microsoft and our therapy teams.

Radlett Lodge School has improved its learning environment following a generous grant from the Novum Foundation, creating wonderful new classroom spaces and allowing the school to take on more pupils in 2024-25. Further exciting plans are ahead as we look to refurbish the old residential areas of the school in 2026.

Training teachers via The Autism Education Trust

The Autism Education Trust (AET) became fully integrated into the National Autistic Society in 2025, following the successful conclusion of its Department for Education-funded Whole School SEND contract.

In 2024–25, the AET:

- trained 91,676 delegates
 - delivered 4,631 training sessions
 - 91.9% of delegates reported leaving training with a wide range of strategies to support autistic children and young people.
-
- “The training gave me a fresh perspective on my role and how I can positively affect a child's day.” Lunchtime Supervisor
 - “The trainers understand the barriers and help bring the strategies into our schools.” SENCO

Researching autistic people's travel experiences

At the end of March 2025, we launched our Empowering Autistic Travel Research Report. This was the result of a year listening to autistic people and their families describing their travel experiences through surveys and interviews, and valuable discussions with transport professionals.

Our project kicked off in April 2024, generously funded by the Motability Foundation. We had a staggering 4,052 responses to our surveys, interviewed 20 autistic people and parents/carers, and had hugely insightful conversations with 22 transport professionals.

People told us about the many barriers autistic people face. Uncertainty, difficult sensory environments, inaccessible information, and a lack of understanding and empathy from others all take their toll, and heavily limit opportunities and quality of life.

This insight has led to ideas for change which are feasible, realistic and backed by evidence. We have provided recommendations for the transport industry, and tips and strategies for autistic people and their families.

This was just one of our ten research partnerships in 2024-25, deepening knowledge about autism and sharing best practice with professionals.

Publicising The Boshier Grant Scheme

In partnership with the National Autistic Society, in 2023, Thea and Peter Boshier established The Boshier Grant Scheme.

Each year, grants of up to £25,000 are awarded to UK-registered charities that share our charity's vision to create a society that works for autistic people. Below are the grant recipients from the first year of the scheme and their impact:

Time Together

The Time Together Parent Carer Group supported 62 parents and carers of autistic individuals, with an estimated 120 people benefiting overall. The group provided a

safe, inclusive space for emotional and practical support, helping reduce isolation, increase confidence, and build advocacy skills. Parents reported improved wellbeing, stronger peer connections and greater empowerment in navigating services. The group is now a trusted, sustainable community resource that continues to strengthen resilience in parents and carers while increasing confidence, wellbeing and knowledge of how to advocate for their autistic child.

Autistic Girls Network

The Autistic Girls Network's Post-Diagnostic Mentor Support Service supported 101 newly diagnosed autistic girls (aged 12 to 18) through tailored one-to-one sessions led by neurodivergent mentors, offering relatable, lived-experience guidance. This safe, non-medicalised space empowered mentees to explore their identity, emotions and future. Many individuals gained confidence, improved their self-advocacy skills, and developed strategies to manage overwhelm. Thirty-two families also received books and joined parent group calls, increasing understanding of how to best support their young person. Overall, the project reduced isolation, nurtured a positive autistic identity and improved mental health by fostering confidence and peer connection.

Bridgend Carers Network

Bridgend Carers Network used the Boshier Grant Scheme funding to further develop and expand their Wildflower Project, which supported over 144 autistic girls and young women (aged 10-25) and their families across South Wales. It offered a unique, female-only space for creativity, connection and confidence-building. With 59 in-person sessions, regular meet-ups, art classes, exhibitions and parent training, the project has fostered friendships and self-acceptance. Attendees reported feeling safer, better informed and more connected through peer support networks and the group's ability to celebrate diversity and focus on ability has resulted in a thriving, inclusive community that empowers both young people and their families.

Leeds Mind

The Leeds Mind 'Open Minds: Autism' project supported over 100 autistic individuals through five-week courses, workshops and peer-led exploration groups focused on mental health. Co-produced and delivered by autistic people, it created a safe, inclusive space for self-reflection, learning and connection. Participants gained tools for emotional regulation, managing burnout, and building self-advocacy. Feedback showed improved self-esteem, confidence and reduced isolation, especially among those awaiting diagnosis. The flexible, accessible delivery model (online, hybrid, autism-friendly venues) enabled diverse participation. The project also informed best practices across Leeds Mind and beyond, and empowered participants to advocate more effectively in their communities, workplaces and relationships.

Sibs

The Sibs 'Adult Sibling Project- Confident Caring' supported adult siblings of autistic people – particularly those currently in, or preparing for, caring roles – by addressing

connection, knowledge and belonging. Through workshops, story-sharing and tailored resources, 100% of participants reported reduced isolation and improved confidence, with 96% reporting increased knowledge. The project exceeded its workshop attendance target (193 vs. 125) and engaged over 860 people. The project also collated stories of adult siblings, produced into an incredibly impactful collection of real-life experience and also provided accessible online resources, extending its reach beyond siblings to professionals and other family members. The initiative built a stronger sense of community and visibility for sibling carers, laying the groundwork for long-term impact and continued engagement.

2025-26 plans

In Autism Know How, we plan to:

- finalise and launch updated training materials
- expand our e-learning offer and promote it to corporates and employers focusing on neurodiversity
- deliver an online professionals' conference on the theme of 'Rethinking support through neuroinclusive practice'
- secure further funding and roll out our *Inclusive Spaces* initiative to a wider range of mainstream schools, using learning gained from the pilot
- develop a neuroinclusive framework for the Employer Award
- train our Resource Centre team staff in EarlyBird
- increase delivery of autism assessments through our Diagnostic and Assessment service
- expand our mainstream school training offer to include wider neuroinclusive practice for education professionals.

In our schools, we plan to:

- celebrate both the 60th anniversary for our Sybil Elgar School and the 50th of Radlett Lodge with amazing summer events. This will coincide with the launch of the Heritage project and underpins the importance of the schools in the charity's foundation.
- continue to develop plans for the exciting rebuild of our Robert Ogden School, engaging architects and consultants, and submitting the first pre-planning documents in May 2025.

Section C: We believe the role of the National Autistic Society is to transform society by building understanding, acceptance and respect for all autistic people.

Lack of understanding has a daily impact on autistic people's lives and is one of the main barriers to taking part in education, work or leisure activities. That's why we're committed to deepening public knowledge, overcoming stereotypes and ending stigma around autism. All our campaigns are driven by the voices and lived experiences of autistic people.

Increasing public understanding

In 2024, we conducted research with autistic people and the public about public understanding and acceptance of autism. This was to lay the foundations for a public awareness campaign in April 2025.

We ran a huge survey in summer 2024, with responses from 8,238 autistic people and families. In addition, we ran focus groups with members of the public on their attitudes and understanding of autism.

The research showed:

- 86-89% of respondents reported that most people had heard of autism, but only 6-9% felt they had a good understanding of it.
- Almost all autistic people, and those supporting autistic people, reported negative assumptions frequently being made about them by members of the public.

A key finding that shaped our campaign was when respondents were asked: "What else should the public do?" 78% of respondents said they wanted the public to: Make small changes in their environments e.g. at work/public spaces that could have a big impact on autistic people. This insight went on to inform our *It's How You Show Up* campaign, which launched in April 2025. It aims to show the public that there are many small but significant ways they can show up for autistic people.

Within 2024-25, we appointed Don't Panic London as our creative agency to develop the campaign and set up steering groups of autistic people and parents to inform it. We also agreed the advertising plan – which was focused on social media advertising and adverts on bus shelters, billboards and shopping malls.

The 'hero' piece of the campaign was a film featuring a real autistic father and daughter. We filmed this in early 2025.

Our in-house Content team travelled up and down the UK to capture stories to feature in the campaign adverts – each of these featured an autistic person and their story of how someone showed up for them.

Raising awareness of masking

In 2024-25, we had a garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, funded by Project Giving Back. Created by Sophie Parmenter and Dido Milne (CSK Architects), it aimed to represent autistic masking and how autistic people experience this in different parts of their lives.

One of the key objectives was to increase public understanding of masking, via media coverage and social media engagement. The garden won a Silver Gilt medal at the show and was featured multiple times on the BBC's main coverage of RHS Chelsea, achieving over 305 media mentions. The total audience reach of the print and broadcast content was 48.2 million. Online content is measured in Unique Visitors Per Month for the outlet, and our coverage had a total desktop UVPM of 615.8 million and a total mobile UVPM of 1.2 billion.

On social media, there was lots of positive engagement with our Chelsea films, images of the garden and our graphics explaining masking, with over 40,000 engagements and over 810,000 impressions on our content during the week itself.

Volunteer feedback was extremely positive too:

- "I think it will have significant impact - lots of people said that ours was the garden that they had particularly come to Chelsea wanting to visit; lots of people with connections to autism and personal stories to share."

In addition to the generous sponsorship from Project Giving Back, we were pleased to receive event support from EY, which made it possible to host a special After-Hours evening at our Chelsea Flower Show Garden. This exclusive event offered a unique opportunity to engage with key stakeholders in a meaningful and memorable setting.

Planning the first World Autism Acceptance Month

We were thrilled to turn World Autism Acceptance Week into the first-ever World Autism Acceptance Month. We planned this change from Spring 2024, with the month itself taking place in April 2025.

At school, people could download our educational resources about autism, developed alongside the AET, including lesson plans, assembly guides, parent leaflets and more. At work, employers could download our information pack and sign up to our free webinar.

Marketing of the month began in earnest in January 2025 and was well-received by audiences. Places at our Spectrum Colour Walk sold out, and we had 2,805 sign-ups for the 5km walks, the most ever.

5,348 people downloaded the employment resources. Since launch, 35,751 people have downloaded the education resources.

Changing the law together

In 2024-25, the *Mental Health Bill* was brought through Parliament and passed through the House of Lords. While we still wish to make it stronger, in its current form, it will remove autism from the definition of mental health that allows people to be detained just for being autistic. This is a major win and a change that we have been campaigning on for many years.

In autumn 2024, our Young Ambassadors were supported to choose a campaign topic that mattered to them and to launch a campaign on it. They chose health inequalities and ran an extremely creative campaign using artwork and poetry to show their healthcare experiences. 2,460 campaigners were inspired to call on Wes Streeting to close the autism health gap.

In January 2025, we published a report highlighting the 'constant fight' that autistic people and their families face to get the right support across education, employment, diagnosis, mental health and social care. To support the launch, we asked our campaigners to invite their MPs to come to our Parliamentary event and learn more about the issues and what could make a difference. 3,327 campaigners sent an invite to their MP.

Influencing policy in Scotland

In Scotland, we gave oral evidence to Committees on three separate occasions; once to the Finance Committee on SPCB Supported Bodies (Commissioners), and twice to the Equalities Committee on the *Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill* and the *Disability Commissioner Bill*.

Our Autistic Campaigners' Group was also invited to the Scottish Parliament by Daniel Johnston MSP to watch a debate on the *Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill* and to speak to MSPs ahead of the debate.

We had 19 separate meetings with MSPs in Parliament and at party conferences, and hosted a parliamentary roundtable about the *Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill* with our campaigners.

We organised three meetings of the Cross-Party Group on Autism on school exclusions, the autistic employment gap and diagnosis, and gave evidence to the Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People.

Our Forgotten Voices campaign in Northern Ireland

In September 2024, we launched *Forgotten Voices*, highlighting the catastrophic failure of Northern Ireland's health and social care system to provide residential care and short breaks to struggling families of autistic young people with high support needs.

The campaign was launched to accompany the Spotlight programme, *I am not OK*. After this aired, we and the families involved worked tirelessly to ensure that the campaign delivers real change. We met with numerous political representatives from all political parties, the Children's Commissioner, the Ombudsman, Carers APG, Autism Reviewer, Health and Social Care Trusts and the Minister for Health. We were delighted when the Minister announced additional budget of £2m for children's disability services in this financial year and recurrent funding of £13m thereafter.

Challenging autism misinformation

As the UK's leading autism charity, we robustly challenged inaccurate stories about autism in the media and from politicians. In 2024-25, we challenged 14 media outlets for poor coverage of autism. In some cases, we met with journalists and editors to correct misinformation and advise on language around autism. We also reviewed scripts to ensure accurate portrayals of autistic characters in TV programmes.

Capturing our heritage and the story of autism in the UK

Throughout the year, we continued to gather and curate the history of the National Autistic Society through the In our Words heritage project (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund). 2024-25 saw the final year of collection and the construction of the online archive that launched in May 2025.

The project team consisted of two paid National Autistic Society staff, a steering group of ten and over 20 volunteers (many of whom were autistic) who were trained in gathering, editing and transcribing oral history interview accounts from key people pivotal in the charity's history.

The aim of the project is not only to preserve the history of the charity for years to come, but to also build a sense of shared history and community around the charity and the milestones it has passed as it continues to evolve over the generations.

Progress on other projects to build autism knowledge and understanding

In our last annual report, we said we would develop an autism knowledge strategy to underpin our work. This was done, and we are now rolling out knowledge champions across the organisation.

Our work is also informed by the views of the people we support, via our Autism Insight Panels. In 2024-25, we applied for funding to further develop our panel of autistic people and their families, but this was unsuccessful. In the meantime, we have continued to engage existing panel members.

We have partnered with other neurodiversity charities to put pressure on the Government to commission a new study on the prevalence of autism. This has been part of our general campaigning work, and in particular, we raised it alongside Autistica, Ambitious about Autism and the Autism Alliance in a recent House of Lords Autism Act Inquiry oral evidence session.

We have continued to campaign on long waits for autism diagnoses in each nation when local influencing opportunities arose. We have also developed a case for support to launch a project on diversity and barriers to support, and are currently seeking funding opportunities for this work.

In 2025-26, we plan to:

- launch our *It's How You Show Up* public awareness campaign – with a new film, advertising on billboards and digital screens across the country and a social media campaign. This campaign will run through the next two years.

Strong foundations to help deliver our ambitions:

Enhancing our supporters' experience

In 2024-25, we focused on ensuring that we provide the best possible experience for our supporters.

We sent over 2,500 thank you emails via an automated tool, speeding up response times. In October 2024, we outsourced the processing of direct debits, which led to faster response times when supporters update their direct debits. To continue this work, we ran a dedicated Supporter Experience project to ensure we are listening, learning and implementing improvements to our ways of working.

We also delivered new and rewarding fundraising offers; ensuring we have opportunities for supporters to donate or fundraise for us in ways that work for and are exciting for them. New ideas such as our 'Stream for Team Autism' challenge were tested to understand what our supporters would like to see included in our fundraising portfolio. Our new virtual gifts range, 'Gifts that do good' was promoted too, allowing our supporters to send a meaningful token to their friends and family while also supporting our work.

We have also done more of what works well. Following the success of our 100 Miles in October Challenge, we planned a new 60 Miles in June Challenge, launching in June 2025. We have also grown our running race portfolio to allow more opportunities for supporters to get involved in the race of their choice.

We're pleased to report a strong year for fundraising, with some key moments that have seen our income increase across almost all streams of fundraising. Key highlights include:

- An exceptional £2.6 million legacy gift that will have a lasting impact on our work.
- Our flagship virtual event, *100 Miles in October*, was a standout success. Supporters more than doubled the fundraising target, raising over £356,600 and cementing it as a key part of our fundraising calendar.
- Our corporate partnerships also went from strength to strength, thanks to excellent engagement and stewardship of all relationships.

We are hugely grateful to everyone who completed an event or ran and raised money on behalf of the National Autistic Society. The generosity of our supporters is helping us reach more autistic people and families across the UK.

Safeguarding

Governance and oversight

The Independent Safeguarding Board continues to provide oversight and scrutiny. In early 2025, it was identified that new board members needed to be recruited to further strengthen the board's capacity to support and challenge. Quarterly reports provide strategic updates and data, highlighting key information, progress and areas for action. The Safeguarding team has been able to respond to the Board's requests to provide more in-depth data in specific areas, such as allegations against staff, which has enabled a much better understanding of some themes and trends across the organisation.

Safeguarding team and training

Our Safeguarding team includes three advisors with specialisms in adults, children and young people, and National Programmes. All advisors are now trained in adult safeguarding. The Safeguarding Lead has been in post for over 18 months now and continues to bring enhanced leadership to the team. The team supports decision-making on external referrals and regulatory notifications while also driving proactive strategies for learning, development and organisational oversight. A key focus of the team during 2024-25 has been identifying where improvements can be made to a person's quality of life or care for people we support in adult services.

Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff, volunteers and trustees. It is delivered through online courses, virtual sessions, or face-to-face training. Trustees received an in-person safeguarding briefing in October 2024.

Adult services

The Adult Safeguarding Induction has been enhanced to include a reflective, case study-based approach, helping staff apply learning in frontline roles. Regular reflective practice sessions are available for managers to embed learning at the service level. The risk escalation procedure is well-embedded and supports operational managers in raising concerns effectively. The training is supported by themes and trends identified through safeguarding notification data. There has been a specific piece of work to raise awareness of how we should support and respond to self-injury across adult services, as a consequence of safeguarding concerns in one service.

The annual safeguarding audit for adult services, now in its second year, identifies progress and areas for development. It fosters a culture of continuous improvement, generating both service-level and organisational actions. One key outcome from last year's audit was the introduction of Leadership of Safeguarding Training, now being delivered across all four nations by the Safeguarding Lead and operational leaders.

A review of the Financial Safeguarding Policy and Procedures has been completed and implemented across Adult Services. The transfer of appointeeships from the National Autistic Society is 90% complete

Two steering groups were established in late 2024 to support risk management and safeguarding of a redevelopment project and a service closure. This has enabled better identification of risks to people we support who have been directly impacted by these changes.

Children and schools

Schools and our children's home receive ongoing support through supervision and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) network events. The events are designed to be reflective and informative on key safeguarding themes and trends for schools. The risk escalation procedure is applied as needed to ensure timely and appropriate responses.

National Programmes

Safeguarding procedures for National Programmes are now fully established, supported by a comprehensive guide. The advisor continues to develop bespoke training and is actively involved in safeguarding processes for new projects. The Safeguarding Advisor has taken a lead on safeguarding training for National Programmes and Corporate Services staff induction.

Digital systems and innovation

During 2024-25, the team continued to develop their existing digital hub to enhance the ability to accurately record and analyse safeguarding data. The team has been working alongside colleagues across the Assurance and Compliance and adult services directorates to support implementation of two new digital systems. Nourish and Radar have been identified to enhance centralised oversight of safeguarding. Early evidence suggests these systems will significantly improve access to person-centred information and risk management.

Human Resources (HR)

HR supported a project across the organisation to embed our new values:

Pioneering:

We are experts who recognise and value expertise in others. We are dedicated to inspiring ourselves and others and to making change.

Empowering:

Through trust and leadership, we maximise autistic power.

Inclusive:

Respect is at our core. We embrace diversity and tackle discrimination.

Upfront:

We are realistic, confident and honest.

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. They guide our decisions and define who we are as an organisation. Focusing on these will help us to grow as an organisation and create a rewarding and supportive place to work.

In recruitment, CV Library was introduced as an additional job board, along with Vercida, a job board that specifically helps employers looking to promote a positive and diverse working environment, and those looking for jobs in an equal opportunities workplace.

We have reviewed our benefit offering on an annual basis, looking at detailed analytics to understand which benefits have the highest and lowest take-up. We are seeing a year-on-year increase in the number of colleagues selecting benefits. We have also looked to provide benefits that support colleagues through challenges such as the cost of living. This year, we introduced technology benefits that allow colleagues to purchase electrical items (computers, home appliances, mobile phones etc.) via salary sacrifice and spread the cost in 12 interest-free monthly payments. As we move forward, we are looking at our workforce demographic and the sectors in which we compete for talent with a view to delivering a more tailored benefit offering.

Our work and wellbeing project will be running over the next 12 months and will include reviewing our current wellbeing support for all our colleagues. The project will look at how we can improve working for the National Autistic Society and enhance support for people who have protected characteristics, including our autistic colleagues. Our Pioneer project will feed into these improvements and ensure that our autistic colleagues continue to have a voice.

We have continued with the digitisation of HR processes, moving the VNF (requesting of new vacancies), contract change, and leaver processes from Word document-based processes to digital alternatives, providing us with better reporting capacity, KPI monitoring and an overall better user experience.

Following the migration of our payroll provision to an in-house solution, the payroll process has been an overall success. We have reduced the number of errors, increased flexibility for the workforce and significantly reduced the cost of delivery. Over the next 12 months, we will be focusing on the payroll software as we look to procure and migrate to a new platform. This is expected to deliver further positive changes to accuracy, compliance and service standards.

Our HR Hub continues to be the primary source of advice and guidance for our staff, responding to an average 230 emails per working day. In addition, 279 employee relations cases were completed and closed during 2024.

Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap analysis looks at the difference in average hourly pay rates for men and women. For the report ending April 2024, the mean difference was –0.6%, equating to women earning 9 pence more than men. This was a switch on last year where men earned slightly more than women, but the gap has reduced by 3p per hour. The median difference was –0.4%, so the middle-paid woman was paid 5p more than the middle-paid man. We also report the proportions of males and females by quartile - where the staff are sorted from highest to lowest by hourly pay and split into four equal-sized groups. Overall, there remained a roughly 70% female, 30% male split, but for 2024, there was an increase in the proportion of men in the lower and upper middle quartiles.

Ethnicity pay gap

This year, we published the organisation's ethnicity pay gap - which looks at the difference in the average hourly pay rates for White and Ethnically Diverse employees. The mean difference was 4.8%, equating to white employees being paid 75 pence an hour more than their ethnically diverse colleagues on average. The median difference was zero. Ethnically Diverse colleagues make up just under 17% of the workforce: a smaller proportion than those who have not disclosed their ethnicity (18%); the remaining 65% are White, predominantly White British. Ethnically Diverse colleagues have their largest representations in the Lower and Upper Middle quartiles, while Adult Services is the most ethnically diverse directorate.

Learning and organisational development

To further develop our colleagues' skills and capabilities, we have completed a re-design of our Induction and Onboarding programme for our adult services frontline colleagues. This has included the introduction of robust measures of assessment to evaluate the transference of learning into practical application in role, tailored to each nation's legislation and improving the overall learner experience.

To support this, we have concluded a mapping exercise of our Mandatory Learning Portfolio against various industry standards' regulatory learning frameworks to ensure we are meeting all nation's statutory training. In connection, we have mapped all roles across directorates to the Mandatory Learning portfolio to align the right learning and development to meet role and nation-specific requirements, cleansed the course data held on our Select HR system and launched management reporting of compliant learning via Select HR. This has improved accuracy of data recording and enabled managers to more closely monitor colleagues' learning and development.

We have begun the build of a Manager Induction and ongoing Management Development Programme to highlight leadership skills gaps

and address with appropriate development to support focused career planning, targeted colleague development and forecasted employee movements.

We have concluded a mapping exercise of the qualifications necessary against the roles for adult services to ensure we are maximising our levy funding and meeting our obligations for qualified individuals as set out by service commissioners.

Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing

We are committed to providing quality services, striving to ensure equal opportunities and diversity in employment and service delivery. This includes seeking to employ individuals based on their skills and talent, and ensuring no one experiences prejudice as a result of a seen or hidden disability. We continue our commitment as a Disability Confident Employer.

We asked colleagues to update the information they disclose to us relating to diversity, including whether they are autistic. We will use this information to develop actions to identify and address potential barriers to attract and improve the experience of all colleagues within the charity.

Volunteering

Our Volunteering team has continued to develop ways of working to support all our amazing volunteers. Our volunteer numbers fluctuate throughout the year depending on events and projects that involve volunteers: we currently have 924 active volunteers. Over two-thirds are from our branches network. During 2024-25, we have recruited 431 new volunteers and 360 volunteers have left their volunteer role.

We are developing a volunteering strategy to ensure that all volunteers are supported in their role. We have continued to grow the number of autistic volunteers that we have, and the most popular reason for volunteering was 'to give something back'.

IT

As mentioned in the Safeguarding section above, in IT, we have been implementing the Nourish Care and Radar systems. This represents a step change for the charity in the digitisation of care and compliance.

Nourish Care will enable us to record information digitally, ensuring that we meet regulatory and legislative requirements. This project is part of our transformative initiative aimed at enhancing our digital infrastructure to better serve the people we support and streamline our compliance processes. The new system is currently rolling out across all adult services and will enhance how we deliver care.

Radar enables all directorates to report incidents, compliments and complaints in real time. It also supports the investigation process and manages actions that emerge from this. Radar will transform our incidents and compliance reporting, with

the capability to produce dashboards and other reports from one central source of data.

We have also continued the development of new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems for our Autism Help and Supporter Care teams. Our new advice and guidance CRM will ensure a personalised service to those who contact us and provide continuity of help and support. It will also help us better understand what autistic people and their families tell us they need from us

We also worked throughout 2024 to update the Autism Know How area of our website and will continue to do so in 2025.

2025-26 plans

In Fundraising, we plan to:

- expand our virtual challenge portfolio, leveraging the outstanding success of our *100 Miles* campaign to inspire even more people to get involved and fundraise in ways that suit their lifestyles
- launch an innovative fundraising product designed to reach and resonate with new audiences, diversifying our income streams and broadening our supporter base
- accelerate the growth of our corporate partnerships, strengthening existing relationships and forging new collaborations that deliver mutual value and long-term impact.
- undertake a comprehensive fundraising audit, using the insights to implement strategic improvements across schools', services' and branches' fundraising.
- continue to enhance our supporters' experience through tailored communications, improved journeys, and more dynamic, interactive content. We will also introduce more personalised and timely thanking, ensuring every supporter feels valued and understands the difference they make.
- introduce a new series of webinars and member benefits, recognising the vital role our members play and offering them meaningful opportunities to connect, learn and feel part of our mission.

In Safeguarding, we plan to:

- implement the Radar incident and risk management system across the organisation.

In HR, we plan to:

- migrate to and embed new HR, Payroll and ATS systems, improving data integration between systems, user experience and reporting output.
- develop a behaviours framework to support our new values and continue embedding values in all our work.

In Volunteering, we plan to:

- embark on an ambitious Volunteering Strategy to improve the volunteer experience as well as explore the Investors in Volunteering kitemark.

Thank you

We would like to sincerely thank all the charitable trusts and foundations, companies, branches and individuals who have helped us with their commitment and generosity throughout the year. Without such fantastic support, we would not be able to provide crucial support, information and advice to many thousands of autistic individuals, their families and loved ones.

Goldman Sachs Gives at the recommendation of Andrew Bagley
ARN Foundation
Thea and Peter Boshier
Buchanan Programme & Greg Forshaw
The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
Cullum Family Trust
The Hobson Charity
The Magnus Trust
Motability Foundation
National Lottery Community Fund (Improving Lives)
National Lottery Community Fund (People and Communities)
National Lottery Community Fund (Young Start)
National Lottery Heritage Fund
Nolan Family Trust
Novum Foundation
The Nurmohamed Family - In loving memory of Rubab Sultanali Nurmohamed
Pears Foundation
Dr. Scholl Foundation
The Garfield Weston Foundation
The Grace Trust
The McClay Foundation
The Rank Foundation
The Rayne Foundation
Ulster Garden Villages
Willie and Mabel Morris Charitable Trust
Advent of Change
Ashmore Group Plc
Atlas Hydrate
AXA XL
Barclays
BDO LLP
The Institution of Mechanical Engineers
Bloomberg Financial Markets Ltd
Bright Funds
British Gas Plc
Caledonian Properties Limited
Capital Group
Chartered Accountants' Benevolent Association
Citibank UK

Clevernet UK
Create Visual Aids
Salesforce
Displaylink Ltd.
EP Barrus Ltd
Ergonomics Solutions Ltd
Eton Law Solicitors
EY
Fraser Cropper
GeneSys Legacy Project Limited
Google
Gordon & Co Insurance Brokers
Hagley West
House of L Toys
HelmsBriscoe
Henry Boot plc
Howden & Howden Foundation
Johnson Matthey plc
Laing O'Rourke
LGT Wealth Management
M&G plc
Markel International
Marvel FMCG Ltd
Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure Ltd
Morrisons Supermarkets PLC
Naval Children's Charity
Mel Components
Procurement Hub
Royal Society of Chemists
Salesforce
Sky Group
Tesco PLC
The Entertainer
The Ice Co Ltd
The Institution of Civil Engineers Benevolent Fund
UK Olight Limited
Verdant Leisure
W & R Barnett
Win Bricks Ltd

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many organisations and individuals – including our celebrity supporters – for their generous contributions, whether through gifts in kind or direct support to our beneficiaries. A special thank you goes to our incredible Team Autism members and supporters, who have taken on amazing challenges throughout the year – running, walking, swimming and

finding countless creative ways to raise funds, and all of our Circle of Friends supporters – many of whom have been supporting our work for a long time.

We are also deeply grateful to the individual and corporate donors who have made significant contributions to our work while choosing to remain anonymous. Your support is truly appreciated.

We also received a number of grants from statutory bodies including:

Cashback for Communities 2023-2026 £674,973: Funding to deliver our Moving Forward+ employment programme for young autistic people in Scotland.
Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland – Self Management Fund 2023-25 £118,072: Funding to deliver our Growing Up project in partnership with Carers Scotland, providing workshops for parents and carers of autistic young people.
Scottish Government and Inspiring Scotland – Autistic Adult Support Fund £176,790: Funding to deliver our Embrace Autism project alongside Autistic Knowledge Development to provide post-diagnostic support.
Scottish Government – Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund, Impact Funding Partners 2023-26 £50,029: Funding to deliver our Connections project, which runs social groups for autistic adults across Scotland.
Department of Health and Social Care 2024-25 £91,700: Funding for the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance.
Greater Manchester Health and Social Care authorities £80,700: For delivery of the Greater Manchester Autism Consortium service 2023-2025.
Department of Communities £92,222: Funding to create a Communications Officer role within our Northern Ireland team 2022-25.
Welsh Government, Sustainable Social Services 2022-2025 £174,721: Funding to create more opportunities for autistic adults in Wales to access peer support and social groups.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Energy and carbon consumption

Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting (SECR) is a legislative requirement for inclusion in the Directors' Report. It requires all large companies to disclose their operational energy consumption and related emissions. This is the fifth year of reporting for National Autistic Society (NAS).

A high-level summary of energy consumption and associated emissions is presented in Table 1 below.

Unit	Gas	Electricity	Transport	LPG	Total
kWh	6,152,783.0	3,309,529.0	1,273,862.0	232,324.0	10,968,498.0
Mileage	NA	NA	1,169,109.0	NA	1,169,109.0
Litres	NA	NA	NA	32,005.0	32,005.0
kgCO ₂ e	1,125,344.0	685,237.9	291,974.8	6,865.1	2,109,421.8
tCO ₂ e	1,125.3	685.2	292.0	6.9	2,109.4
%	53.4%	32.5%	13.8%	0.3%	100.0%

Table 1: High-level summary of the energy consumption (kWh), mileage and associated emissions.

Figure 1 below highlights NAS's total CO₂e emissions breakdown. Scope 1 emissions covering LPG, transport and gas from operating buildings, residential facilities supporting people with disabilities and travel using leased vehicles account for 67.5% of the total emissions. Scope 2 emissions, arising from purchased electricity used to operate buildings, represent the remaining 32.5%.

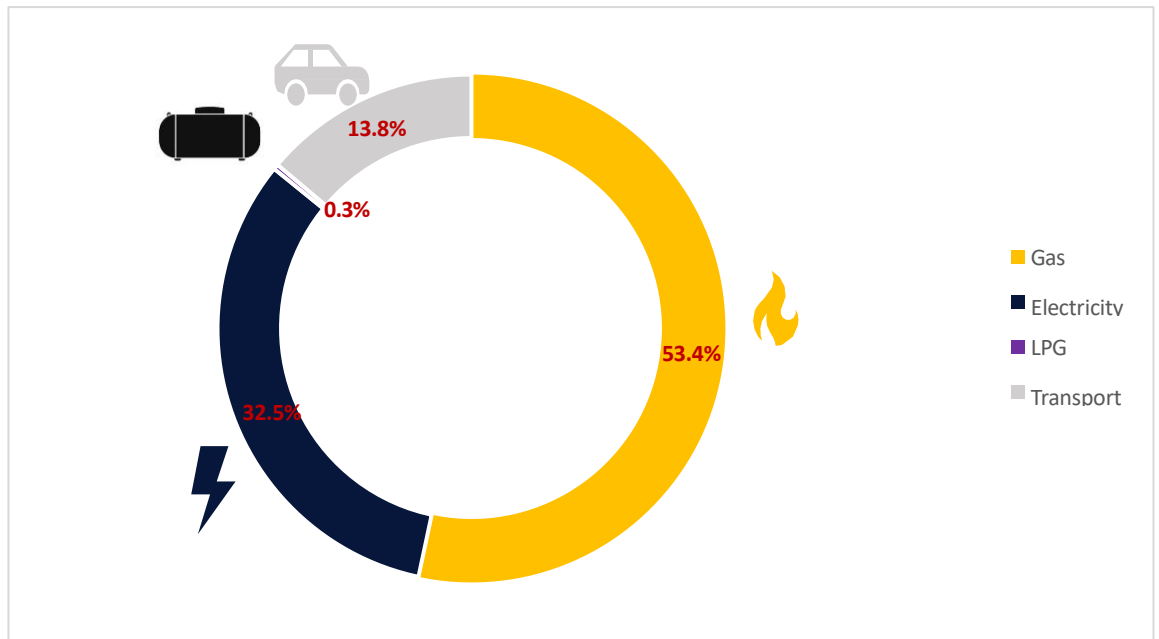


Figure 1: NAS's CO₂e emissions by source (gas, electricity, LPG, and transport).

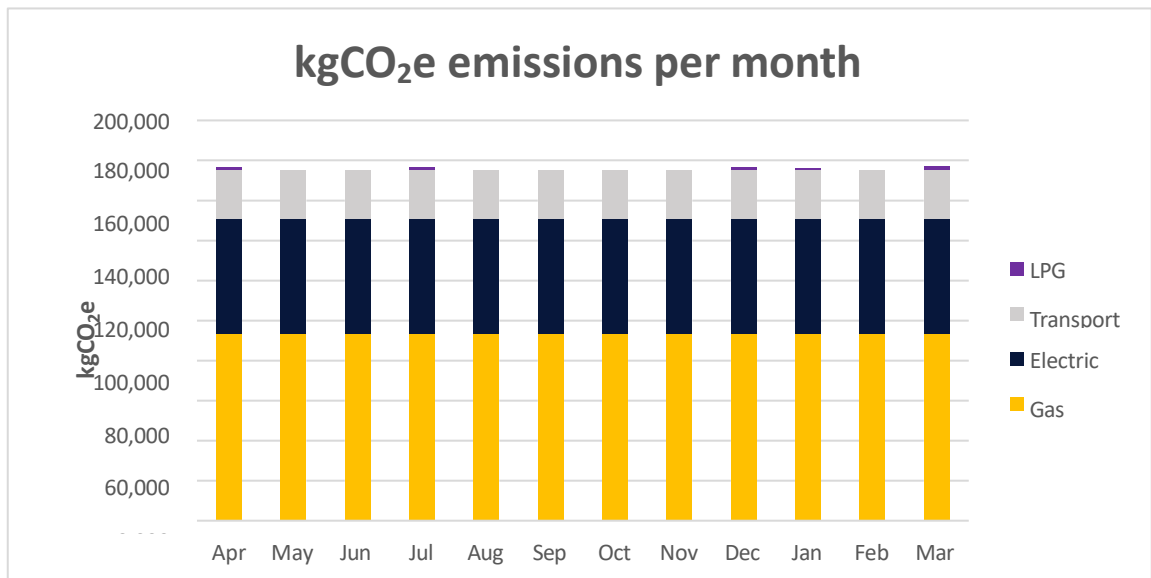


Figure 2: NAS's kgCO₂e emissions by source (LPG, transport, electricity and gas).

Figure 2 presents NAS's kgCO₂e emissions. Monthly figures for electricity and natural gas show no variation, as detailed monthly breakdowns were not available. The only fluctuation shown reflects the timing of bulk LPG purchases.

Figure 3 below compares NAS's annual energy consumption (kWh) across the two most recent reporting periods. Electricity use remains unchanged due to the absence of updated data.

Natural gas consumption shows a slight increase following Heating Degree Days (HDD) adjustments. Energy consumption for transport has decreased as NAS reduced its vehicle fleet, while LPG consumption also shows a modest decline.

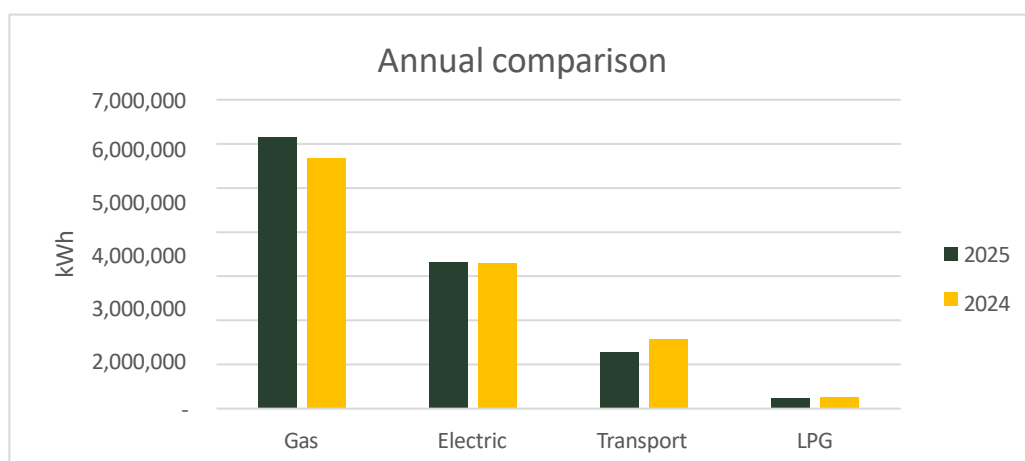


Figure 3: Comparison of NAS's annual energy consumption across recent reporting periods.

Intensity Metric

The intensity metric provides NAS with an indicator of carbon performance relative to operational activity. Staff numbers were used to calculate the intensity metric, resulting in an average of 775 kgCO₂e per employee across 2,722 staff. This metric is updated annually and shown in Table 2, with Figure 4 highlighting year on year differences. Between the 2024 and 2025 reporting periods, an increase of 77 kgCO₂e per staff member was observed.

Intensity metric		
Year	2025	2024
Number of staff	2,722	3,017
kgCO ₂ e	2,109,422	2,106,787
kgCO ₂ e/psm	775	698

Table 2: NAS's intensity metric, 2024 vs 2025.

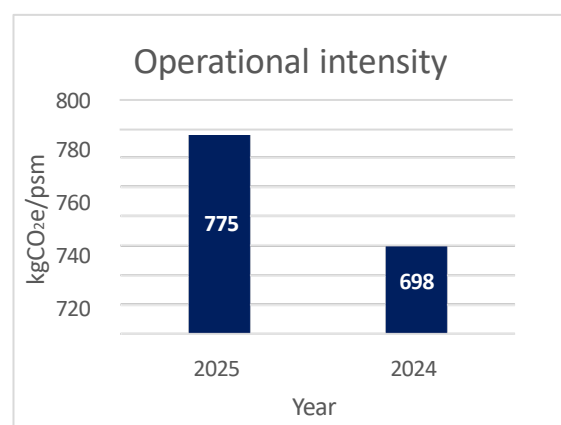


Figure 4: NAS's operational intensity per staff member.

National Autistic Society initiatives

This section highlights energy and carbon improvement projects undertaken during the reporting period and those that are currently underway.

Reduction of portfolio

Between April 2024 and March 2025, NAS vacated 11 sites. This reduction in the occupied portfolio is expected to further contribute to lower carbon emissions.³

Reduction in fleet

NAS continues to transition towards lower emission and electric cars. During the reporting period, leases for 18 vehicles were terminated as part of a phased approach to reduce fleet size and associated fuel consumption.

Utilities and their management

To enhance the accuracy and consistency of energy data, NAS transitioned to a new energy supplier during the reporting period. This change is intended to improve data transparency and strengthen monitoring of energy consumption. In addition, NAS engaged a new utility broker to manage its electricity and gas usage.

Miscellaneous upgrades

NAS implemented a series of improvement projects across its estate to enhance energy efficiency and operational resilience. Key initiatives included:

- Upgrading 12 boilers across 7 properties.
- Installing LED lighting across the majority of Robert Ogden School, significantly reducing electricity consumption for lighting.
- Replacing outdated windows and doors at Rhyd Hir property to improve insulation and thermal performance.

Methodology

Energy sources

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources while Scope 2 emissions come from the generation of purchased energy.

NAS is measuring both Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. All energy data were sourced from the previous year's reports compiled by NAS's energy supplier, SSE. Transport data and staff numbers, however, were gathered internally.

Table 3 presents the breakdown of carbon emissions, with Scope 1 emissions accounting for 67.5% of the total and Scope 2 emissions representing the remaining 32.5%

NAS is measuring the following emissions:

Scope 1: Emissions from leased vehicles and on-site gas consumption.

Scope 2: Emissions from electricity use.

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Total
tCO ₂ e	1,424	685	2,109
%	67.5%	32.5%	100%

Table 3: NAS's carbon emissions by scope (Scope 1 and Scope 2).

Calculations

Table 4 presents the conversion factors applied to translate energy consumption from kWh to kgCO₂e. The 2024 greenhouse gas reporting factors were published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). These carbon conversion factors were issued by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

Intensity calculations	kWh	kgCO ₂ e
Gas	-	0.1829
Electricity	-	0.20705
LPG	7.259	0.2145
Petrol	1.14204	0.26473
Diesel	1.07954	0.27334

Table 4: Factors used for calculations to convert energy into carbon emissions.

Part two: Financial Review

The year has been challenging, with ever-increasing pressure on staff and other costs, coupled with continuing local authority budget constraints. Nonetheless, our financial performance has improved relative to previous years and has also exceeded budget. The in-year results of NAS Group show a net operating surplus of £4.5m from continuing operations, excluding actuarial gains on pensions schemes. It should be noted that the reported surplus includes an abnormally large legacy of £2.8m and a £2m donation. The underlying surplus is £0.6m. In 2023/24, the NAS Group generated an operating deficit of £752k.

The challenge to recruit and retain sufficient and appropriate staff remains key, as does the need for local authorities to recognise the increase in our costs and renegotiate fees for these services. During the year, we were, however, successful in attracting and retaining sufficient staff to reduce the cost of agency staff from £6.9m in 2023/24 to £5.8m.

Unrestricted reserves (excluding fixed assets) have decreased from £7.5m to £5.7m during the year. The unrestricted free reserves exclude the reserve designated for long-term capital financing to acquire fixed assets. Our free reserves are £4.7m. The Trustees have chosen to designate funds of £1.1m to fund the continuing development work of the Autism Education Trust, and also £2.8m to fund the future capital investment.

The relatively high level of surplus disguises underlying operational performance. As mentioned above, the £5.4m surplus comprises mainly non-recurring items such as pension gains, restricted income and the exceptional donation which has been designated to fixed asset replenishment. Notwithstanding this, the underlying operating result is a small surplus, compared to deficits in recent years. However the fact remains that NAS' continuing operations are subject to significant financial pressure and continued financial sustainability is predicated on our ability to ensure contracted services income continues to cover delivery cost.

The Trustees are confident that, after review of our income and expenditure projections and reserves, the National Autistic Society can continue to be able to provide much-needed support to our beneficiaries.

Financial highlights

NAS Group

Total income was £102m, including the large legacy and donation referred to above, an increase of £7m from last year. Expenditure increased slightly from £96m to £97m despite the increase in National Living Wage from £10.42 to £11.44 per hour from 1 April 2024. This reflects reductions from efficiencies in support costs.

Fee income continues to be derived mainly from statutory bodies in relation to the delivery of services; this proportion decreased slightly in year to 79% (2023/24: 81%) of our total income.

Overall, voluntary income increased by £5m to £12.5m, primarily accounted for by the large legacy and donation referred to above. The legacy comprises principally a property portfolio held in trust. The value and timing of the realisation of the portfolio was unclear at the time of notification. The position became clearer during 24/25 and NAS' share of the asset has been recognised during the course of the year, amounting to £2.8m. The donation relates to the building of a day centre, and has been treated as restricted.

NAS' share of the trusts is initially held as an investment but will be realised as cash in due course.

Expenditure on raising funds remained stable at £1.8m (2023/24: £1.8m) and therefore the net contribution to voluntary income increased to £10.7m (2023/24: £5.7m).

We continue to invest in those areas (Supporter Fundraising and Individual Giving) which deliver sustainable, unrestricted income in the future, and this is reflected in the long-term trend towards unrestricted income, which increased to just over two-thirds of our voluntary income last year.

Cash decreased by £2.3m to £11.6m (2023/24: £13.9m). This reflects in part the annual payment relating to the Brent Local Government Pension Scheme deficit which was made during the year and amounted to £0.9m (2023/24: two payments, total £1.8m). We also invested in improving the quality of our residential premises.

Debtors decreased by £4.7m to £13.2m (2023/24: £8.5m).

Creditors decreased by £4.8m to £15.6m (2023/24: £9.8m).

Investment income was stable at £614k (2023/24: £623k). Reduced return on lower cash balances was offset by income from the assets included in the legacy. Income relates to interest receivable on cash deposit balances and income from the trusts comprising the legacy referred to above.

Staff costs accounted for 72% of our overall costs, a slight decrease from 74% last year. The National Autistic Society continues to work towards a strategy of paying the living wage.

We purchased fixed assets valued at £4.5m (2023/24: £1.2m) in the year. This was primarily for improvements to properties in which our services are provided.

Designated funds other than Fixed Assets are set at £3.8m (2023/24: £1.5m), which is deemed acceptable for the Autism Education Trust development and planned capital projects.

The value of our LGPS pension deficit decreased in year to nil from £1.8m. This is partly due to the annual payment to Brent for the year (£0.9m). The balance of the decrease is due to actuarial factors.

A number of efficiency programmes were completed during the year and are planned to continue next year to reduce costs across a number of areas of the charity.

NAS Services Ltd

NAS Services Ltd is the trading arm of the National Autistic Society through which it delivers the majority of its welfare and education services. It is funded through fee income received from providing statutory services to autistic children and adults.

Turnover increased to £65m from £63m due primarily to fee income increases negotiated in the light of cost inflation, most notably the increase in the National Living Wage. We continue to work with funding authorities to negotiate uplifts to meet the increasing costs of providing services.

£59m (2023/24: £57m) was spent supporting autistic children and adults in our schools and services.

Pressure from local authorities seeking to reduce costs poses a major continuing challenge for the company. Given that we continue to operate in a period of austerity and challenge, the directors consider the results for the year and the position at the year-end to be satisfactory and in line with their expectations.

All profits are passed to the National Autistic Society as the parent company by means of a gift aid payment. Reserves consist of the retained share capital of £2.

Autism UK Ltd

Autism UK Ltd is the subsidiary through which we trade Christmas cards and sponsorship of conferences and events.

Turnover increased from £43k to £75k mainly due to increased sponsorship.

Costs increased to £29k (2023/24: £28k) due to higher levels of recharge from the parent company.

All profits are passed to the National Autistic Society as the parent company by means of a gift aid payment. Reserves consist of the retained share capital of £2.

Fundraising practices

The charity takes a diversified approach to fundraising, generating voluntary income from individual donors, fundraisers, companies, trusts and foundations and from statutory bodies. We use several different channels to communicate with our supporters, including mail, email, phone and social media.

The charity employs a number of professional fundraisers directly and uses agencies in respect of payroll giving, telemarketing, plus online giving and sponsorship sites such as JustGiving.

The charity subscribes to the Fundraising Regulator, including the Fundraising Preference Service, and we are also signed up to the Telephone Preference Service. Our lotteries and raffles are regulated by the Gambling Commission. We adhere to the Chartered Institute of Fundraising 'treating donors fairly' guidance, and we are actively participating members of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising compliance directorate and the Fundraising Regulator code of fundraising practice. All of our standard training for new starters and refresher training includes information on protecting vulnerable people.

No failures have been reported in respect to industry-recognised fundraising standards in 2024-25. Since its inception in 2017 up to 31/03/2025, the charity has received – and acted upon – 21 suppression requests from the Fundraising Preference Service, four of which were received in the year to 31 March 2025. We monitor all agencies on a regular basis, including listening to a selection of telemarketing calls. During campaigns, we listen to calls on a weekly basis.

During the year, the charity received 105 complaints, ten of which were related to fundraising practice or products. All of these complaints were fully investigated and resolved. The ten fundraising practice concerns were received, investigated and resolved by the Supporter Care team.

£281k expenditure was incurred in initiatives to increase future fundraised income. This is the first tranche of a 5 year programme over which period a total investment of £1.4m is expected to generate £6.3m incremental income.

Pay policy

Pay is set at the point of appointment based on a job evaluation, comparable market benchmark and the charity's financial perimeters. We remain committed to becoming a market median payer, and future compensation strategies will aim to achieve this within the boundaries outlined.

Following on from appointments, any increase in remuneration is considered based on the following context:

- performance and contribution measured against business priorities
- contractual and statutory obligations (eg teachers' terms/equal pay)
- comparable market benchmark
- alignment with the charity's pay mechanism and cycle
- alignment with the charity's pay priorities at the given time
- affordability within the charity's financial perimeters.

All awards are recommended by the line manager and approved by a director. For directors, pay recommendations are made by the CEO and approved by the Chair.

For the CEO, pay awards must be signed off by the Chair of Trustees and Chair of Finance.

Work has begun on job descriptions, salary benchmarking and the revision of pay bands, and will continue next year. We have started to introduce additional benefits and are at an advanced stage in the introduction of a new soft benefits package.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees fully recognises its responsibility for the management of risk.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is charged with identifying, assessing and monitoring the major risks (based on likelihood of occurrence and potential impact) faced by the charity.

The Audit and Risk Committee, which reports directly into the main Board of Trustees, examines and monitors the effectiveness of risk management, providing challenge to ELT members where control measures require strengthening. This committee involves Trustees, and other senior managers, including the Head of Internal Audit and Risk.

In addition, the other main committees – Finance, Quality Assurance and Schools Governance – are charged with monitoring and reviewing the risks associated with their areas of responsibility.

During the year, the Audit and Risk Committee has continued to maintain a close overview of management's implementation of departmental and interdepartmental action plans to mitigate the risks considered to have high levels of both likelihood and impact.

The Board of Trustees as a body reviews the risk register on a quarterly basis and is able to confirm that the major risks to which the charity is exposed continue to be properly identified and closely monitored, and that appropriate control measures are in place and under regular review in order to manage those risks.

The Society has identified the following risks:

- **Financial:** Pressure remains on contracted and voluntary income streams. Attention is currently being paid to the continued rise of inflation (wage, general and utility costs in particular). The Board, supported by its subcommittees, monitors in year business performance and the medium and longer-term financial risks and opportunities, weighing up the need to manage costs tightly within available income against ensuring appropriate investment in improving and developing our offer to beneficiaries to best meet their needs.
- **Operational:** There has been an increased focus on ensuring there is a sufficient substantive, experienced and skilled workforce across all services and a concentrated effort on reducing the use of agency staff to drive up the quality of

care and support for our beneficiaries. The use of a single agency staff provider has been introduced to support a more consistent approach to using agency staff, and work has begun to explore the options for the digitalisation of care records.

- Operational: We work closely with stakeholders, including autistic people who receive our services, as well as those who fund these services, to ensure that our activities are structured accordingly. In addition, we recognise the challenges of new technology and the different ways of communicating and processing transactions. The increasing risk related to cyber activities is managed proactively within the organisation.

The Trustees have considered whether there are any factors likely to affect the financial performance or position of the charity going forward and have identified that we, along with many other charities, must continue to closely analyse the impact of the care sector crisis.

The Society has in place a well-established system of internal controls that govern its operations. These controls have been designed to provide a reasonable assurance against risk. The internal audit function evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of controls across our activities.

Reserves policy

Trustees review reserve levels as part of their review of the financial performance of the Society throughout the year as well as an annual review as part of the strategic planning process.

We have maintained the level of designated funds last year and continue to focus on the underwriting of the continued future of the AET. Note 15 to the accounts provides more details on our designated funds.

The general reserves figure of £4.7m is regarded as being the charity's level of free reserves. In calculating the balance the figure does not include any fixed assets or designated funds held. As explained further below, the balance also does not include the charity's LGPS pension liability as determined under FRS102 on the grounds that the liability, which is assessed by an actuary, is not in total immediately repayable with plans for meeting the deficit over a long period in place.

The balance on general reserves has reduced. This is due to Trustees decision to designate funds for capital projects, combined with the increase in the fixed asset reserve from capital investment during the year.

The relatively high level of surplus disguises underlying operational performance. As mentioned above, the surplus comprises mainly non-recurring items. Notwithstanding this, the underlying operating result is a small surplus, compared to deficits in recent years. However the fact remains that NAS' continuing operations are subject to significant financial pressure and continued financial sustainability is predicated on our ability to ensure contracted services income continues to cover delivery cost.

The Trustees had previously considered that a range of between £4.5m and £9m is a reasonable level of free reserves for this and next financial year whilst it moves forward with its strategic review of its operations.

	2025	2024	2023
Reserves held at 31 March	£000	£000	£000
Total reserves	34,972	29,556	29,038
Restricted & Designated:			
Restricted Reserves	(4,429)	(2,690)	(3,059)
General Funds – designated	(3,777)	(1,520)	(1,871)
Designated Funds – Fixed Assets	(22,111)	(21,092)	(20,638)
Pension	-	1,792	3,775
Free Reserves	4,655	6,046	7,246

Going concern

The Trustees consider that the current target remains appropriate and realistic and take the view that the level of risk reserve and cash held is acceptable given the economic climate in which the charity is operating. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As shown in our accounts, our cash position continues to demonstrate that we are able to fund our revenue expenditure including the annual pension contributions. We also hold a number of fixed assets which could be disposed of to mitigate any larger, long-term risks.

The Board of Trustees has reviewed budgets and forecasts to March 2029 which consider the charity's activities, financial position and risk management policies together with likely factors affecting future development including environmental factors such as the increase in staffing costs and the level of inflation including utility costs. Forecasts have been prepared for a range of scenarios and the directors have considered in-depth the scenario which they believe will most likely occur.

The Board has concluded that the existing levels of free reserves and available cash, coupled with the strategic review of operations and risk-based controls, are sufficient to ensure the National Autistic Society has the resources to continue operating as a going concern. In our highest risk area, the delivery of our adult social care operations, a service-by-service turnaround plan addressing those services with reduced financial viability is underway and regularly monitored by the Board. Additionally, as part of the forecasting exercise, the Board has identified further opportunities to realise surplus assets which will further strengthen the financial position if needed during the period of turnaround in adult services or if they believe the most likely scenario is at risk. On this basis, the Board has concluded that there are no material uncertainties surrounding the National Autistic Society's ability to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future and the accounts have been prepared on that basis.

Pensions and FRS102

When reviewing the charity's risks and appropriate level of reserves required, the Trustees also take into consideration the impact of its pension liability as determined under FRS102.

We include within our accounts the actuarial valuation of Brent Local Government Pension Scheme, one of our two Local Government Pension Schemes. The other, Somerset shows an actuarial surplus which is not been reflected in the balance sheet either this year or last as it is not considered that it can be realised in the foreseeable future. This year, our actuarial deficit relating to the Brent scheme has become a surplus of £2.3m with a net favourable movement of £3.2m. This follows a decrease in the liability of £2.1m to £1.8m in 2023/24, a decrease of £11.4m to £3.8m in 2022/23 (including the removal of the NASAT component - £2.2m), a decrease of £4.3m to £15.2m in 2021/22, an increase of £4.9m to £19.5m 2020/21, a decrease of £2.9m to £14.5m in 2019/20, and an increase of £1.4m to £17.4m in 2018/19.

As with Somerset however it is not considered possible to realise the Brent surplus in the foreseeable future and so no asset has been recorded.

These movements demonstrate the volatility of this liability which is largely due to the changing conditions in financial markets and inflation assumptions which are outside our control.

Whilst there is volatility in the overall liability, the National Autistic Society does have more certainty than in the past over the cash flows surrounding the pensions schemes and these are factored into our budgets and forecasts. The Brent scheme was closed to new accruals as at 31 March 2022, in November 2023 we completed a Debt Deferral Agreement which allows the National Autistic Society to settle the residual debt by a series of annual payments, fixed in the near term. Annual payments are £892k fixed until the year ended 31st March 2028.

Note 21 to the accounts details the impact of the FRS102 pension adjustments to our charity's financial position.

Summary of the effects of changes in the pension funds on reserves	2025 £m	2024 £m	2023 £m	2022 £m	2021 £m
Restricted Reserves excluding NAS Academies Trust	4.4	2.7	3.0	2.8	2.5
Restricted Funds NAS Academies Trust	-	-	—	19.8	19.9
Unrestricted reserves before Pensions Fund deficit	30.5	28.7	29.8	34.0	33.2
FRS 102 opening deficit on pension funds	(1.8)	(3.8)	(15.2)	(19.5)	(14.5)
Change in FRS 102 Pensions deficit in year	1.8	2.0	11.4	4.3	(5.0)
Reported total reserves as per Balance Sheet	34.9	29.6	29.0	41.4	36.1

Investment policy

Investment return and adequacy against policy

In order that the Society has cash readily available to meet working capital and other needs, the Trustees continue to adopt a cautious policy to maintain diversified cash deposits rather than to invest in stocks, shares, property or other investment products.

As per the amended policy agreed in 2012/13 and regularly reviewed, the Trustees have agreed that £4m could be deposited in one-year bonds, funds could also be deposited in notice accounts, short-term deposit accounts or three to six month bonds with a £5m maximum investment in any one institution rated A1 or better. This policy remained in place during 2024/25.

Due to increasing interest rates over the past year, the investment return was slightly ahead of expectations.

As at March 2025, the Society had £3m in an instant access fixed rate deposit and a further £8.7m held in interest bearing current accounts.

Investments carried on the balance sheet relate to NAS' interest in two trusts which constitute a legacy recorded during the year. The Trusts comprise various assets and are administered by a firm of solicitors on behalf of the legator's estate. The Trusts were initially recorded at probate value. Income from the various component assets is recorded as it arises. The Trust assets are being liquidated and the carrying value is reduced as cash distributions are received from the administrators.

Structure, governance and management

Our constitutional structure

The National Autistic Society (NAS) first registered as a charity in 1962, Charity No CR269425, was incorporated in 1975 as a company limited by guarantee, and registered in England and Wales, Company No 1205298. The National Autistic Society operates under our Articles of Association as adopted by the members on 30 November 2024.

The services that we provide in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are managed from local offices that use the working names NAS Scotland, NAS Cymru and NAS Northern Ireland.

We are a membership organisation, with 16,969 memberships and 20,189 voting members. Members can contribute to the work and success of our charity in many ways, by leading a local branch, by contributing their experiences through surveys and consultations, by fundraising at a local level and by spreading information about autism. Members who want to be active in their local area can join or set up a branch, operating under the name and charity number of the parent body. As at 31 March 2025, there were 83 branches across the UK.

The National Autistic Society owns a number of subsidiary companies, of which two are currently active: NAS Services Limited through which we provide child and adult services and Autism UK Limited through which we trade Christmas cards, merchandise and sponsorship of conferences and events. The National Autistic Society's interest in the NAS Academies Trust came to an end on 19 December 2022 when the Trust became independent and changed its name to Liberty Academies Trust.

A list of all subsidiary companies is shown within the notes to the accounts.

Charitable objects and public benefit

Our formal objects are: "the development, delivery and promotion of the education, health, welfare, care and support of people on the autism spectrum and with related conditions ("autistic people")."

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 (4) of the *Charities Act 2011* by referring to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aim and objectives of the Society and in planning its future activities.

The opportunity to benefit is not restricted by any constraint other than our capacity to provide an activity or service in a particular geographical location. It is not restricted by gender either. The education and care services we provide are outside the funding capacity of all but a very few families. Those fees are almost invariably fully paid, directly or indirectly, by the state.

Under the law of Scotland, the National Autistic Society is established for the public benefit through:

- advancement of education
- advancement of health
- relief of those in need through age, ill health or disability.

These activities are either provided for the benefit of autistic people directly or indirectly through supporting their parents, carers or advocates.

Consulting with members

The charity consults with its members on a regular basis in order to keep abreast of those issues and topics that are most important to them, prioritising its campaigns and activities accordingly.

National Autistic Society branches support individuals and families affected by autism on a daily basis and their experiences are fed back to inform the charity's work. This helps to ensure that the organisation continues to be focused and relevant.

The Board of Trustees

Our Trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing our charity, ensuring that it is solvent, well-run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up. The Trustees elect from their number the Chair of Trustees and, if they choose, one or more Vice Chairs.

Board vacancies are advertised with potential candidates being interviewed by a small panel of Trustees, which includes the Chair.

In addition, candidates are interviewed by a panel of autistic people who provide advice and recommendations to the Trustees' panel. Appointments are confirmed by the full Board and are subject to retrospective ratification by the membership at the next AGM.

The Board seeks to ensure a good mix of experience and expertise, covering commercial business, local government management, secondary and further education, special needs teaching, marketing, accountancy, organisational and financial management and of course, personal and family experience of autism.

Trustees hold office for a term of four years and may stand for re-election provided they do not serve for longer than eight years in aggregate (12 years if serving as the Chair of Trustees or Chair of a Board Committee).

The Board of Trustees also appoints the Chief Executive, who is accountable to the Trustees for the day-to-day management of the charity, and for implementing strategic policy approved by the Trustees. The Chief Executive is salaried and is not a Trustee. No Trustee has any financial interest in the charity or in its subsidiary

companies. No Trustee receives any remuneration for his or her services as a Trustee, but may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses.

Trustees meet formally as a body at least four times a year but all Trustees are also involved in one or more standing Board committees, each of which meets several times a year. Trustees may also attend general meetings of members (all Trustees must be subscribing members of the charity). All Trustees submit to an enhanced disclosure check from the Disclosure and Barring Service on being elected and this is refreshed periodically while they remain a Trustee.

Trustee induction and training

All Trustees undergo an induction process, the aim of which is to give them an understanding of their role and responsibilities as Trustees. These include an understanding of the Code of Governance and Trustees' responsibility for safeguarding and risk management.

Terms of reference for the various Board committees are also supplied, together with an explanation of the structure of the National Autistic Society and the roles of senior management.

Specific induction programmes are tailored to match the experience of individual Trustees but will generally include briefing sessions with members of the Senior Management Team, visits to one or more of our schools and adult services and on occasion, external training in the roles and responsibilities of Trustees. Periodically, an audit of Trustees' skills and experience is undertaken and this helps the Chair, in discussion with individual Trustees, to identify further training that will enhance their contribution to the charity's governance.

Decision-making

Having approved the annual budget (reflecting the strategic plan), the Board of Trustees delegates policy implementation and day-to-day management to the Chief Executive. Outcomes are monitored through a structure of committees of Trustees acting under terms of reference delegated by the main Board. The Finance Committee acts on behalf of the Board to review staff pay and benefits, with the committee's recommendations being considered by the full Board. This committee also oversees the objectives, performance appraisals and succession planning of the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team.

It is the role of the individual committees to ensure that the Board of Trustees considers all constituent parts of the charity when making decisions and that funds are used to best meet the requirements of each beneficiary group.

The Board of Trustees meets at least four times a year to review finance and quality reports, discuss reports from committees and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The ELT, which comprises the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and seven directors, meets at least fortnightly.

The directors of the charity consider that they have fulfilled their duties in accordance with section 172(1) of the UK *Companies Act 2006* and have acted in a way which is most likely to promote the success of the Group for the benefit of its stakeholders as a whole in the following ways:

When making decisions, the Trustees and their delegated bodies review both the immediate and longer-term implications of the decision and look to balance financial and compliance considerations with the need to deliver our mission to the benefit of autistic people and families. In particular, they consider:

•Impact on employees

Our charity fulfils its objectives through the work of our employees and volunteers. Our staff and volunteers' knowledge, skills and dedication to our mission plays a major role in our success. We take seriously our duties to keep our staff safe and care for their wellbeing. From the start of the coronavirus pandemic, we have required all staff who can work from home to do so to maintain their safety and wellbeing. For further details, see 'engagement with employees' below. We regularly review the support we provide to employees and make improvements where appropriate. We have a series of local and national staff forums to allow managers to hear employees' concerns directly, including a specific autistic colleagues forum. A member of the Board of Trustees acts as a link between the national staff forum and the Board. We also run regular staff and volunteer surveys to make sure that Trustees are aware of staff experiences. The findings include analysis of the specific experiences of autistic staff and volunteers. We use a variety of channels to communicate with colleagues, including email, e-newsletters and Yammer.

•The people we support

Our charity exists to benefit autistic people and families and maximising benefit is therefore our number one priority. We have different interactions with people we support across our schools, social care services, information, advice, employment and peer support services. In schools and social care services, we tailor people's education, support and care to their individual needs. Following on from the COVID restrictions, Trustees from our Schools Governance Group visit schools to meet with students and understand their experiences. In our social care services, we run Service Advisory Groups so that people's collective experiences are understood by managers and changes can be made to benefit people using the services. Similarly, Trustee visits to adult services are recommencing, following the lifting of COVID restrictions.

We regularly consult people using our advice, information, employment and peer support services to understand their needs and challenges and allow us to improve the design of those services around what people want. Reports of people's experiences using these services are shared with Trustees.

•Our suppliers

We recognise the crucial part our suppliers and partners play in ensuring we are able to operate, deliver our plans and meet the needs of our beneficiaries. We work closely to ensure our relationships with our key partners are managed appropriately, from planning long-term collaborations to payment terms and communication.

•Community and environment

When planning our activities, we work closely with all key stakeholders, particularly our beneficiaries, to ensure that our work helps to make society work for autistic people. We regularly conduct the largest surveys of autistic people and families in the UK and our findings drive our programme planning, alongside input from our volunteer-run branches, members and staff.

Many of our activities, particularly our schools, adult services and branches, are an integral part of their local communities, from providing localised advice to supporting professionals locally and facilitating community events in our buildings.

The Charity Code of Governance

The National Autistic Society Board of Trustees takes its governance responsibilities seriously and, as a large charity, aims to have a governance framework that is fit for purpose, compliant and efficient. The Board has established a solid foundation in governance in which all of its Trustees are clear about their roles and legal responsibilities, are committed to supporting the charity to deliver its objectives most effectively for its beneficiaries' benefit, and contribute to the charity's further development.

Following a detailed review of the Charity Code of Governance in 2022, a review of the board committee structure and terms of reference has been completed and implemented in 2023.

Management of the charity

The activities of the National Autistic Society are managed by the Chief Executive, supported by an executive leadership team of seven directors who lead the functional activities. These are: the Director of Finance; the Managing Director of National Programmes; the Director, Assurance and Compliance; the People Director; the Managing Director of Adult Services; Managing Director of Education and Children's Services and the Director of IT and Business Change.

Diversity

We are committed to providing quality services, striving to ensure equal opportunities and diversity in employment and service delivery. This includes seeking to employ individuals based on their skills and talent, and ensuring no one experiences prejudice as a result of a seen or hidden disability.

We are a confident disability employer and as part of our commitment to diversity, we are equally keen to ensure we continue to promote a strong connection with people on the autism spectrum in all our recruitment and employment practices. We have strengthened the involvement of autistic people in staff recruitment and have reviewed our recruitment practices to make sure that we are as open as possible to autistic applicants. We continue to roll out the mentoring support programme to employees on the autism spectrum, as well as providing programmes for managers geared towards providing a better understanding of how to support individuals with a seen or hidden disability in the workplace.

We know that staff development and engagement are crucial to our organisation's future. A staff survey is undertaken on a regular basis and this helps to inform our priorities and policies to develop effective communications with our staff and to understand the key issues and priorities. For some years we have maintained an effective Staff Forum and this is supported by regional forums to ensure that we can understand and be responsive to local staffing issues and suggestions.

Our Autistic Colleagues Network continues to thrive. Open to any staff member who identifies as autistic, the network offers mutual support and regular meetings. Members also feed in their insight and experience to help shape our charity's internal and external projects and campaigns.

Honorary offices

The National Autistic Society benefits from a Royal Patron, a President and a number of Vice Presidents. Vice Presidents kindly give their time voluntarily to serve the charity in a range of important ways, from fundraising to raising awareness of our work. Our Patron, Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh, has fulfilled the role of Royal Patron for over 20 years and continues to provide amazing support to the National Autistic Society, most recently releasing a video of support for our first World Autism Acceptance Month (previously World Autism Acceptance Week). We also remain hugely grateful to our President, Jane Asher, for her commitment to our charity. Jane is a passionate advocate of our work and is always on hand to support – be it by helping to plan 'Starshine', our annual Christmas carol concert, launching an important new project for us or simply approving our annual Christmas card range!

Key volunteers, staff and advisers

Patron: Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh GCVO
President: Jane Asher
Chief Executive: Caroline Stevens

Vice Presidents

Elizabeth, Baroness Astor of Haver
Dr Gillian Baird OBE

Professor Simon Baron-Cohen
Colin Barrow CBE
Baroness Browning of Whimble
Peter Cullum CBE
Simon Cullum
Professor John Dickinson
David Downes
Sir Norman Lamb
Dr Christopher Mason MBE
Baron Tuhig of Islwyn and Glansychan

Trustees

Dr Stephen Ladyman, Chair of Trustees

Zahaan Bharmal

Resigned 9 December 2024

Olga Clayton

George Davidson

Sheila Norris

David Reeves

Resigned 17 July 2024

Helen Roberts

Resigned 9 June 2025

John Roscoe

Harry Wordsworth

Pamela Marsden

Rachel Bowden

Julian Schofield

Alastair Gilmartin-Smith

Tracey Anne Bowen – Lowe

Appointed 10 June 2025

Marc Hommel

Appointed 10 June 2025

Angharad Jackson

Appointed 10 June 2025

Kerri Nash

Appointed 10 June 2025

Executive Leadership Team

Caroline Stevens, Chief Executive

Caroline Foster, Human Resources

Josh Fitzgerald, Education

Lesley Andrews, Assurance & Compliance

resigned 31 May 2024

Paul Robinson, Finance

Peter Watt, National Programmes

resigned 2 July 2024

appointed 10th October 2025

Banker

Barclays Bank PLC, One Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Auditor

Buzzacott Audit LLP, 130 Wood Street, London EC2V6DL

Solicitors

Clifford Chance London, 10 Upper Bank Street, London E14 5JJ

Hempsons LLP, 100 Wood Street, London EC2V 7AN

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP, 134 Edmund Street, Birmingham B3 2ES

Trowers & Hamblins London, 3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ

Stone King LLP, Boundary House, 91 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6HR

Company Secretary

Bruce Thompson

Statement of Trustee responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of the National Autistic Society for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP)
- ◆ make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- ◆ state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- ◆ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company and the group will continue to operate.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's and the group's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and the group and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the *Companies Act 2006*, the *Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008*, the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006* (as amended) and the provisions of the charitable company's constitution.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website.

Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The following statements have been affirmed by each of the Trustees of the charitable company:

- ◆ so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information (that is, information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware; and

- ◆ each Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

This Directors Report, prepared under the *Charities Act 2011*, the *Companies Act 2006*, the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005*, was approved by the Board of Trustees of the National Autistic Society on 9th October 2025 including in their capacity as company directors approving the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Ladyman', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Stephen Ladyman
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Independent auditor's report to the Trustees and Members of National Autistic Society

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Autistic Society ('the charitable company') and its subsidiaries ('the group') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Group and Charity Balance Sheets, Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including principal accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the group's income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Companies Act 2006* and the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and Regulations 6 and 8 of the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and charitable parent company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's or the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the directors' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the *Companies Act 2006*

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the Trustees' report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the *Companies Act 2006* and the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006* requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and under the *Companies Act 2006* and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations are set out below.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the *Companies Act 2006*, the *Charities Act 2011*, the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005*, together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's and the group's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company and the group for fraud. The laws and regulations we considered in this context for the UK operations were CQC Regulations for service providers and managers, taxation legislation, employment legislation and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing and recognition of contract income, recording the impact of CQC regulatory reviews and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management and the Audit & Risk Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission and CQC, and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the *Companies Act 2006*, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Buzzacott Audit LLP". The script is cursive and fluid, with the letters connected. The "B" is large and loops around, and the "LLP" is written in a slightly more compact, but still cursive, style.

Hugh Swainson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 16 October 2025

Consolidated statement of financial activities

Year to 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2025 Total funds £'000	2024 Total funds £'000
Income & endowments from:					
Income from charitable activities					
Transforming lives:					
. Education		28,577	39	28,616	25,387
. Social and independent living support		51,219	114	51,333	53,824
. Other charitable activities		7,537	158	7,695	6,850
Changing attitudes:					
. Other charitable activities		79	-	79	88
Donations and legacies	1	8,069	4,428	12,497	7,513
Other trading activities	2	104	-	104	79
Investment income		614	-	614	623
Other Income		1,079	-	1,079	1,046
		<u>97,278</u>	<u>4,739</u>	<u>102,017</u>	<u>95,410</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		1,816	-	1,816	1,769
Expenditure on charitable activities					
Transforming lives					
. Education		25,398	361	25,759	24,273
. Social and independent living support		55,609	222	55,831	58,332
. Other charitable activities		11,126	2,417	13,543	11,288
Changing attitudes					
. Other charitable activities		606	-	606	500
Total	3	<u>94,555</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>97,555</u>	<u>96,162</u>
Net Income / (expenditure)	4	<u>2,723</u>	<u>1,739</u>	<u>4,462</u>	<u>(752)</u>
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	21	954	-	954	1,270
Net movement in funds		<u>3,677</u>	<u>1,739</u>	<u>5,416</u>	<u>518</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total fund balances brought forward at 1 April 2024	14-16	26,866	2,690	29,556	29,038
Total fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2025	14-16	<u>30,543</u>	<u>4,429</u>	<u>34,972</u>	<u>29,556</u>

The net income for the financial year dealt within the financial statements of the Parent Company was £3,617k, before actuarial gains of £954k on defined benefit pension schemes (2023-24: net expenditure £752k).

The notes on pages 75 to 102 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated statement of financial activities

Year to 31 March 2025

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	5	27,408	24,463	27,408	24,463
Investments	6	2,428	-	2,428	-
		29,836	24,463	29,836	24,463
Current assets					
Stock		91	79	87	73
Debtors	8	13,190	14,107	8,455	9,929
Cash at bank and in hand		11,662	13,946	11,656	13,946
		24,943	28,132	20,198	23,948
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	14,595	16,190	9,850	12,006
Net current assets		10,348	11,942	10,348	11,942
Total assets less current liabilities		40,184	36,405	40,184	36,405
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	11	3,609	3,898	3,609	3,898
Provision for Dilapidations	11	1,603	1,159	1,603	1,159
Net assets excluding pension liabilities		34,972	31,348	34,972	31,348
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	21	-	(1,792)	-	(1,792)
Net assets including pension liabilities		34,972	29,556	34,972	29,556
Funds					
Restricted funds	13	4,429	2,690	4,429	2,690
Unrestricted funds:	15				
Designated funds – fixed assets		22,111	21,092	22,111	21,092
Designated funds – capital investment		2,700	-	2,700	-
Designated funds – other		1,077	1,520	1,077	1,520
General fund		4,655	6,046	4,655	6,046
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liabilities		30,543	28,658	30,543	28,658
Pension reserve	14	-	(1,792)	-	(1,792)
Unrestricted funds including pension liabilities		30,543	26,866	30,543	26,866
Total funds	16	34,972	29,556	34,972	29,556

The notes on pages 75 to 102 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 9th October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Dr Stephen Ladyman
Chair of Trustees
Company Number 1205298

Consolidated Statement of cash flows Year to 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	A	1,801	(2,373)
Net cash used in investing activities	B	(3,660)	(540)
Net cash used in financing activities	C	(425)	(425)
Decrease in cash in the year		(2,284)	(3,338)
Net cash resources at 1 April		13,946	17,284
Net cash resources at 31 March		11,662	13,946
Decrease in cash in the year		(2,284)	(3,338)

A Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Net income (expenditure) for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)	5,416	(753)
Adjusted for:		
Interest from investments	(486)	(623)
Non – cash investment gain	(128)	-
Interest payable on loan	136	144
Depreciation charges	1,314	989
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	287	-
Non cash legacy	(2,700)	-
Decrease in stock	(12)	(4)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors (excl. interest receivable)	917	(1,008)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(2,105)	486
Pension service cost / (credit) and other costs	54	179
Pension deficit repayments	(892)	(1,784)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	1,801	(2,373)

B Cash flows from investing activities

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Interest income on cash deposits	486	623
Purchases of property, plant and equipment	(4,546)	(1,163)
Disposal of investments	400	-
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	-	-
Net cash used in acquiring assets	(4,146)	(1,163)
Net cash used in investing activities	(3,660)	(540)

Consolidated Statement of cash flows Year to 31 March 2025

C Cash flows from financing activities

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Repayment of NAS Enterprise Campus loan	(425)	(425)
Net cash used in financing activities	(425)	(425)

D Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Cash in hand	11,662	13,946
Total cash and cash equivalents	11,662	13,946

E Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2024 £'000	Cashflow £'000	At 31 March 2025 £'000
Cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	13,946	(2,284)	11,662
Bank and other loans	(4,323)	289	(4,034)
Total	9,623	(1,995)	7,628

Company information

The company is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and registered as a charity in England and Wales and Scotland. The address of the registered office is Weston House, 42 Curtain Rd, London EC2A 3NH.

Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK FRS102 2019, the *Charities Act 2011*, the *Companies Act 2006* and applicable accounting standards.

National Autistic Society meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions available in FRS102 from the requirements to present a charity only cash flow statement and certain disclosures about the charity's financial instruments.

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling and rounded to the nearest thousand pounds unless otherwise stated

Basis of Preparation

They have been prepared on a going concern basis as set out in the 'Reserves policy' section of the annual report.

The Trustees consider that the current target remains appropriate and realistic and take the view that the level of risk reserve and cash held is acceptable given the current economic climate in which the charity is operating. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operation existence for the foreseeable future. As shown in our accounts, our cash position continues to demonstrate that we are able to fund our revenue expenditure including the annual pension contributions.

The Board of Trustees have reviewed budgets and forecasts through to March 2029 which consider NAS's activities, financial position and risk management policies together with likely factors affecting future development, including impact of the pandemic, rising inflation, energy costs and other operating challenges on income, cash, reserves and service delivery.

Forecasts have been prepared for a range of scenarios and the directors have considered in depth the scenario which they believe will most likely occur. The Board has concluded that the existing level of free reserves and available cash, coupled with strong cost control and oversight of the transformation programme, are sufficient to ensure the National Autistic Society has the resources to continue operating as a going concern. Additionally, as part of the forecasting exercise, the Board has identified further opportunities to realise surplus assets which will further strengthen the financial position of the charity if needed should the cost reductions not be achieved as quickly as planned or the most likely scenario does not occur.

Principal accounting policies 31 March 2025

On this basis, the Board have concluded that there are no material uncertainties surrounding the National Autistic Society's ability to continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future and the accounts have been prepared on that basis.

Basis of consolidation

The statement of financial activities (SOFA) and balance sheet consolidate the financial statements of the charity and its subsidiary undertakings. The results of the subsidiaries are consolidated on a line-by-line basis. See notes 7 and 8 for further details.

No separate SOFA has been presented for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the *Companies Act 2006*.

Material commitments of a capital nature are recognised at the end of the year in the notes to the accounts. These are major contracts entered into by the charity on which liabilities are due in future years.

The charity carries out some activities through a national network of branches. As part of the charity, they use the same charity number, raise funds for both national and local activities and receive central support through advice and publicity materials. All branch transactions are accounted for gross in the accounts of the charity and all assets and liabilities, including cash retained in separate bank accounts are included in the charity's balance sheet.

Income

All income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to funds, any performance conditions have been met and it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

The following accounting policies are applied to specific income streams:

Donations and legacies

Voluntary contributions

Donations and all other receipts from fundraising are reported gross and the related fundraising costs are reported in costs of generating funds.

Legacies

Legacies are accounted for when entitlement is taken, which is when probate has been granted, estate finalised and a notification received by the executors that a distribution will be made or when it is received. Receipt wholly or in part is probable when amount can be measured reliably and notification has been received of intention to distribute.

Donated services or facilities

These are recognised as income when the charity has control over the term or conditions have been met and the economic benefit from the use by the charity is probable and can be measured reliably. Professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the gift to the charity which is the amount that the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain at equivalent economic benefit on the open market, a corresponding amount is then recognised as expenditure in the period of receipt.

Grants receivable

Grants receivable for revenue expenditure

Grants are recognised in the SOFA when the conditions for receipt have been met. Where a grant is performance related, ie linked to specific volumes of output, the grant income will be recognised to the extent that the service has been provided.

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the year for which is receivable and any unspent amount is reflected as a balance of the NAS AT restricted fund.

Grants without preconditions are recognised immediately in the SOFA.

Grants receivable for capital expenditure

Grants in respect of capital expenditure are recognised in the SOFA when receivable and not deferred. Once the capital asset is acquired, the asset is then used in line with the funder's requirements. Where the restriction remains, the asset is allocated to a restricted fund and shown as restricted capital reserves. The reserves are then reduced each year by the amount of the annual depreciation charge to the asset.

Contract income

Income from the provision of services under contract is recognised in the SOFA to the extent that the services have been provided. Where such income is invoiced or received in advance it is included in creditors as fees invoiced in advance and deferred income.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. This includes pension contributions, depreciation and deficits on disposals, direct costs of the charitable activities together with support costs that enable these activities to be undertaken. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on apportionment bases.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on raising funds

Expenditure on raising funds include the costs incurred by the fundraising team in raising voluntary income (donations, gifts, legacies and grants), costs incurred in connection with the purchase of Christmas cards for resale and the securing of sponsorship and investment management fees.

Charitable activities

The costs of charitable activities comprise all the resources applied by the charity in undertaking its work to meet its charitable objects as set out in the Trustees' report.

Grants payable

In some limited circumstances, grant funding is provided to third parties to undertake work that contributes to the charity's objectives. In such cases, the total cost of the activity includes both costs incurred directly by the charity and funding provided to third parties through grant-making activities. Grants payable are recognised when a constructive or legal obligation arises.

Governance

Governance costs represent expenditure incurred in compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

The charity maintains various types of funds as follows:

Restricted funds

These are funds which are to be used in furtherance of the objects of the charity but in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes.

Unrestricted funds

These are funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Designated funds

These are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for specific purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements along with estimated timescales as to when the funds will be spent. Where a fund is created for a capital expenditure project, transfers are made out of this fund to the fixed asset designated fund when a fixed asset is purchased.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between restricted and unrestricted funds are disclosed separately on the SOFA. Transfers between general unrestricted funds and designated funds are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements. Transfers arise from a number of circumstances, but most commonly:

- ◆ to transfer assets to and from the fixed asset designated fund;
- ◆ to transfer assets between other designated funds and the general fund;

Principal accounting policies 31 March 2025

- ♦ to transfer the value of fixed assets from restricted to unrestricted funds when the asset has been purchased from a restricted fund donation but the asset is held for a general and not a restricted purpose; and
- ♦ to transfer assets from unrestricted income funds to clear a deficit on a restricted fund.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation to date, which is provided in equal instalments over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

The financial threshold for capitalising an asset is £5,000.

No depreciation is charged on freehold land. The rates of depreciation applied to other assets are:

♦ Freehold properties	2%
♦ Leasehold properties	over the term of the lease
♦ Major refurbishment	5 - 20%
♦ Motor vehicles	25%
♦ Fixtures and office equipment	33%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

The condition and carrying value and, where appropriate, service potential, of the freehold and short term leasehold properties are evaluated for impairment on a regular basis. Where the carrying value of an asset is considered to be impaired, the difference between the existing and carrying value and the written down value is taken to reserves.

Irrecoverable VAT

A significant amount of VAT is irrecoverable because the group has a mixture of activities which are zero and standard rated, exempt and outside the scope of VAT. The irrecoverable VAT is either allocated or apportioned to the relevant costs in the SOFA or included in fixed assets on the balance sheet.

Financial instruments

The National Autistic Society has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transactions value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors and accrued income. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise bank loans and overdrafts, trade and other creditors and accruals.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates, assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described in the accounting policies and are summarised below:

Residuary legacies – The charity recognised residuary legacies once the estate has been finalised and a notification received by the executors that a distribution will be made. Cases where the exact amount has not been finalised require an estimation of the amount receivable.

Pension liabilities – The charity recognises its liability to its defined benefit pension scheme which involves a number of estimations as disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Dilapidations provision – The charity has provided for its possible liability in relation to its leasehold properties totalling £1,603k.

Pensions contributions

The charity operates both defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes.

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charge to the SOFA is the contribution payable to the pension scheme in the relevant accounting period.

Defined benefit pension scheme

The costs of providing these benefits are assessed by a qualified actuary on a periodic basis and charged over the expected remaining service life of the current employees with the charity. Within the SOFA, the current and past service costs are recognised as part of the operational costs, interest costs and expected returns on assets are shown as part of finance income, the actuarial gains and losses are disclosed on the face of the SOFA.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

The National Autistic Society contributes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (the TPS) at rates set by the TPS actuary and advised to Council by the TPS administrator. It is a multi-employer pension scheme and it is not possible to identify the assets and liabilities of the TPS which are attributable to the Charity. In accordance with FRS102 the TPS is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme.

Related parties

In accordance with the provisions of FRS102, the charity discloses in the notes to the financial statements material transactions with related parties. See notes 8 and 20 for further details.

Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis to the SOFA over the lease term, even where payments are not made on such a basis. Where incentives to sign an operating lease exist, these are spread on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Donations and gifts	4,445	3,893	8,338	5,740
Legacies	3,594	6	3,600	1,267
Grants – revenue	30	529	559	506
2025 Total	8,069	4,428	12,497	7,513

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2023 £'000
<i>Donations and gifts</i>	3,927	1,812	5,740	7,482
<i>Legacies</i>	1,265	2	1,267	1,153
<i>Grants – revenue</i>	1,159	936	2,095	4,595
<i>Grants – capital</i>	—	—	—	62
2024 Total	6,351	2,750	9,101	13,292

As per our policy, all notified legacies were reviewed to determine whether or not they should be accrued in the current year end. We reviewed our legacy pipeline and considered the accuracy of predicting the amount and timing of receipt and have recognised as revenue only when appropriate.

The Society benefits greatly from the involvement and support of its many volunteers who help with our campaigning, run our local branches and direct support programmes as well as our advisors, trustees and councillors. In accordance with FRS102 and the Charities SORP (FRS102), the economic contribution is not recognised in the accounts.

During 23 – 24 the NAS received grants from Government authorities relating to delivery of services, amounting to £1,588k. These were disclosed as donations in the accounts for that year. In 24-25 the corresponding amount has been included in Social and Independent Living support. The comparative amounts for 23-24 have been restated accordingly.

2 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Income				
Sponsorships	50	-	50	19
Merchandising	54	-	54	60
Total	104	-	104	79
Expenditure				
Merchandising	22	-	22	27
Total	22	-	22	27

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2023 £'000
Income				
Sponsorships	19	—	19	27
Merchandising	69	—	69	65
Total	88	—	88	92
Expenditure				
Merchandising	22	—	27	10
Total	22	—	27	10

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Direct costs 2025 £'000	Support costs 2025 £'000	Total costs 2025 £'000	Total costs 2024 £'000
Expenditure on raising funds	1,816	-	1,816	1,769
Charitable expenditure				
Transforming lives:				
. Education	22,179	3,580	25,759	24,273
. Social and independent living support	48,008	7,823	55,831	58,332
. Other charitable activities	11,197	2,346	13,543	11,288
Changing attitudes				
. Other charitable activities	606	-	606	500
Total expenditure	83,806	13,749	97,555	96,162

3 Analysis of expenditure (continued)

	Direct costs 2024 £'000	Support costs 2024 £'000	Total costs 2024 £'000	Total costs 2023 £'000
<i>Expenditure on raising funds</i>	1,769	—	1,769	1,993
Charitable expenditure				
<i>Transforming lives:</i>				
. Education	20,584	3,689	24,273	30,538
. Social and independent living support	50,823	7,509	58,332	58,413
. Other charitable activities	9,199	2,089	11,288	11,943
<i>Changing attitudes</i>				
. Other charitable activities	500	—	500	635
Total expenditure	82,875	13,287	96,162	103,522

Support costs are made up of:

	Education £'000	Social & independent living support £'000	Transforming lives other charitable activities £'000	Total 2025 £'000
Human resources	645	1,945	272	2,862
Information technology	987	1,815	1,097	3,899
Finance & business services	896	2,037	469	3,402
Chief executive, governance & quality assurance	716	1,110	387	2,213
Marketing & customer relations management	336	916	121	1,373
Total	3,580	7,824	2,347	13,749

	Education £'000	Social & independent living support £'000	Transforming lives other charitable activities £'000	Total 2024 £'000
Human resources	619	2,108	194	2,921
Information technology	807	1,433	751	2,991
Finance & business services	1,344	2,063	522	3,929
Chief executive, governance & quality assurance	667	1,071	496	2,234
Marketing & customer relations management	252	834	125	1,211
Total	3,689	7,509	2,088	13,286

Governance cost included in support costs was £300k (2023/24: £267k).

3 Analysis of expenditure (continued)

Basis of allocation

Support costs are allocated as follows:

- ◆ Human resources and payroll is allocated on headcount.
- ◆ Offices services is allocated on utilisation of premises by individual areas of activity.
- ◆ Information technology is partly allocated on numbers of users.
- ◆ All other support costs are allocated as a percentage of income.

Governance cost analysis

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Company secretary	133	-	133	110
Internal audit	75	-	75	90
Meeting expenses	12	-	12	7
External audit	78	-	78	59
Trustees' expenses	2	-	2	1
Total	300	-	300	267

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2023 £'000
Company secretary	110	—	110	103
Internal audit	90	—	90	131
Meeting expenses	7	—	7	13
External audit	59	—	59	131
Other expenses	—	—	—	35
Trustees' expenses	1	—	1	5
Total	267	—	267	418

4 Net expenditure

Net expenditure for the year is stated after charging:

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Auditor's remuneration:				
Statutory audits				
. current year	74	72	72	70
. taxation, advisory & pension audit	4	4	4	4
Depreciation:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,315	989	1,315	989
Profit/loss on disposal of fixed assets				
Profit (loss on disposal)	(285)	—	(285)	—
Operating lease rentals:				
Rent payable on properties	2,887	3,112	2,887	3,112
Hire of equipment	114	60	114	60
Hire of vehicles	615	657	615	657

Notes to the Financial Statements Year to 31 March 2025

5 Tangible fixed assets applied for charity use – Group & Entity

	Land and building £'000	Long leasehold properties £'000	Short leasehold properties £'000	Major refurbishment £'000	Motor Vehicles £'000	Fixtures and office equipment £'000	Assets under construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost								
As at 1 April 2024	29,692	1,601	4,644	3,242	108	3,734	561	43,582
Additions	162	-	-	206	-	535	3,643	4,546
Disposals	(52)	-	(412)	(90)	(17)	(1,014)	(168)	(1,753)
Transfers for year	-	-	-	1,250	-	841	(2,091)	-
As at 31 March 2025	29,802	1,601	4,232	4,608	91	4,096	1,945	46,375
Accumulated depreciation								
As at 1 April 2024	8,351	496	4,064	2,709	108	3,391	—	19,119
Charge for year	481	32	120	208	-	473	-	1,314
Released on disposals	(24)	-	(389)	(30)	(17)	(1,006)	-	(1,466)
As at 31 March 2025	8,808	528	3,795	2,887	91	2,858	-	18,967
Net book value								
As at 1 April 2024	21,341	1,105	580	533	—	343	561	24,463
As at 31 March 2025	20,994	1,073	437	1,721	-	1,238	1,945	27,408

5 Tangible fixed assets applied for charity use – Group & Entity (continued)

The Trustees have considered the condition and value of the remaining freehold and short leasehold properties occupied by the charity and, in their opinion, the service potential remains unchanged and not impaired. In addition, there are no legal, maintenance or other restrictions which would prevent the charity using the properties for their current purposes or for the charity's purposes.

6 Investments

In November 2023 NAS was notified of a substantial legacy, comprising shares as co-beneficiary in two Trusts. The value and likely timing of realisation was determined during the year with sufficient precision for the legacy to be recorded as income. The trusts are generating income from their assets which are recorded as again as it arises. During the year an interim distribution was made to beneficiaries of which NAS' share was £400k.

While it is NAS' intention to liquidate its interest in the Trusts, the timing of this is uncertain and so it is shown as a fixed, rather than current asset.

	Group 2025 £'000	Charity 2025 £'000
Balance as at 1 April 2024	-	-
Value of Legacy recognised in the period	2,700	2,700
Trust income for the period	128	128
Distribution received in the period	(400)	(400)
Balance as at 31 March 2025	2,428	2,428

In addition, the NAS Group comprises the following subsidiaries.

NAS Services Ltd.

The Society owns all of the share capital of NAS Services Ltd., a company registered in England and Wales (No. 2757062), engaged in the provision of services.

	2025 £	2024 £
2 Ordinary £1 Shares	2	2

Autism UK Ltd.

The Society owns all of the share capital of Autism UK Ltd., a company registered in England and Wales (No. 03133553), engaged in fundraising including Christmas card sales and promotional work.

	2025 £	2024 £
2 Ordinary £1 Shares	2	2

Other subsidiaries

The Society owns the entire share capital of the following dormant subsidiaries all registered in England.

		2025	2024
		£	£
Autistic Cards Ltd.	(No. 00888690)	100	100
Autism North West Ltd	(No. 03331914)	2	2
Ideas on Autism Ltd.	(No. 03902836)	2	2
NAS Network Ltd.	(No. 03270103)	2	2
Autism Scotland Ltd.	(No. 03775069)	1	1
Autism Wales Ltd.	(No. 03775081)	1	1
Action for Autism Ltd.	(No. 03775060)	1	1
		109	109

All of the above listed subsidiary companies were dormant throughout this period and have the same registered office as the parent.

7 Results of trading companies and parent charity

	The National Autistic Society 2025 £'000	The National Autistic Society 2024 £'000	NAS Services Ltd 2025 £'000	NAS Services Ltd 2024 £'000	Autism UK Ltd 2025 £'000	Autism UK Ltd 2024 £'000
Turnover	36,922	32,426	65,020	62,941	75	43
Gift aid income from subsidiaries	6,258	6,320	-	—	-	—
Operating charges	(38,718)	(39,498)	(58,808)	(56,635)	(25)	(25)
Surplus (deficit)	4,462	(752)	6,212	6,306	50	18
Administration and other costs	-	—	-	—	(4)	(3)
Surplus (deficit) before actuarial (losses) gains	4,462	(752)	6,212	6,306	46	15
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	954	1,270	-	—	-	—
Amount covenanted to the charity	-	—	(6,212)	(6,306)	(46)	(15)
Retained surplus for the year	5,416	518	-	—	-	-

The net current asset and share capital and reserves for both NAS Services Limited company registered in England and Wales (No. 2757062) and Autism UK Limited company registered in England and Wales (No. 03133553) as at 31 March 2025 was £2, representing the share capital in each company (2024 £2 for NAS Services Limited and £2k for Autism UK Limited). Both companies have the same registered office as the parent.

7 Results of trading companies and parent charity (continued)

All companies have an accounting year end of 31 March.

Transaction with subsidiaries

The transfer under gift aid of trading profits to the charity from its wholly owned subsidiaries NAS Services Ltd and Autism UK Ltd took place during the year.

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
NAS Services Ltd	6,212	6,306
Autism UK Ltd	46	15

Amounts charged from NAS to NAS Services during the year were £59m (2024: £57m).

Amounts charged from NAS to Autism UK during the year were £4k (2024: £3k).

Amounts due from subsidiary undertakings at year end were as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
NAS Services Ltd	1,575	2,811
Autism UK Ltd	6	4
Total	1,581	2,815

There were no other related party transactions.

8 Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade debtors	8,177	10,465	2,286	3,472
Other debtors	653	404	231	404
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	—	1,582	2,815
Prepayments and accrued income	4,360	3,238	4,356	3,238
Total	13,190	14,107	8,455	9,929

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Loans repayable	425	425	425	425
Trade creditors	2,727	1,564	2,727	1,584
Taxation and social security	1,431	1,907	1,431	1,907
Accruals	4,759	6,962	2,233	4,413
Deferred fee income and grants	3,723	3,389	1,502	1,734
Deferred income other than fees	1,532	1,943	1,532	1,943
	14,595	16,190	9,850	12,006

In 23-24 £2.4m credit balances with funders were shown as Trade Creditors. The corresponding amount for 24-25 is included in Accruals. The prior year amounts have been restated accordingly.

10 Deferred income other than fees

Deferred income relates to advance booking on conferences, employment, diagnostic and EarlyBird training and income received in advance for deferred projects, both restricted and unrestricted.

	Group 2025 £'000	Charity 2025 £'000
Balance as at 1 April 2024	1,943	1,943
Amounts released in year	(1,943)	(1,943)
Amounts deferred in year	1,532	1,532
Balance as at 31 March 2025	1,532	1,532

	Group 2024 £'000	Charity 2024 £'000
Balance as at 1 April 2023	1,693	1,693
Amounts released in year	(1,693)	(1,693)
Amounts deferred in year	1,943	1,943
Balance as at 31 March 2024	1,943	1,943

11 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
NAS Enterprise Campus loan (Note a)	3,609	3,898	3,609	3,898
Total	3,609	3,898	3,609	3,898

Note a

In July 2017, the charity purchased the NAS Enterprise Campus at Luxborough Lane, Chigwell for £6m plus £0.12m irrecoverable VAT, the purchase being funded by a loan from the National Westminster Bank (acting through its agent the Royal Bank of Scotland Plc) of £6m repayable over 10 years at a fixed rate of 3.26%, with a capital repayment holiday for the first year. The loan was originally secured on the City Road Offices, but from June 2022, Trustees elected to secure the loan against the Enterprise Campus. Guarantees in respect of all amounts owed by the charity to the lender were provided by the charity's active trading companies, NAS Services Limited and Autism UK Limited, their exposure being joint and several.

Dilapidations provision – Group and Charity

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
At 1 April 2024	1,159	869
Amounts provided for the year	479	312
Amounts released in the year	(35)	(22)
At 31 March 2025	1,603	1,159

The dilapidations provision is recognised on a lease by lease basis and is based on the group's best estimate of the likely committed cash flow.

12 Loans

The loan shown in note 12 is repayable as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
NAS Enterprise Campus loan				
Instalments falling due in less than one year	425	425	425	425
Instalments falling due between two & five years	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699
Instalments falling due after five years	1,910	2,199	1,910	2,199
	4,034	4,323	4,034	4,323

13 Movement on restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2025 £'000
Transforming lives					
. Education	429	39	(361)	-	107
. Social and independent living support	-	114	(222)	108	-
. Other charitable activities	2,084	4,586	(2,417)	(108)	4,145
Changing attitudes					
. Other charitable activities	177	-	-	-	177
Total	2,690	4,739	(3,000)	-	4,429

Other Charitable Activities includes a single fund of £2,337k(2024: £nil) in respect of donations received for the building of a day centre in Northern Ireland. No other individual fund is greater than £200k.

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2024 £'000
Transforming lives					
. Education	434	16	(21)	—	429
. Social and independent living support	(1)	240	(338)	99	-
. Other charitable activities	2,468	2,402	(2,687)	(99)	2,084
Changing attitudes					
. Other charitable activities	158	92	(73)	—	177
Total	3,059	2,750	(3,119)	—	2,690

14 Movement on unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Capital transfers £'000	Loan £'000	Actuarial gains £'000	Other transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2025 £'000
General fund	6,046	97,278	(94,501)	(1,309)	290	-	(3,149)	4,655
Designated funds:								
Fixed assets	21,092	-	-	1,309	(290)	-	-	22,111
Capital Investment Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,700	2,700
Autism Education Trust	1,520	-	-	-	-	-	(443)	1,077
Total designated funds	22,612	-	-	1,309	(290)	-	2,257	25,888
Total unrestricted funds excl pension reserve	28,658	97,278	(94,500)	-	-	-	(892)	30,543
Pension reserve	(1,792)	-	(54)	-	-	954	892	-
Total unrestricted funds	26,866	97,278	(94,555)	-	-	954	-	30,543

Capital transfers – These are amounts transferred to the fixed asset designated fund from general reserves to match expenditure on new fixed assets.

Other transfers – These are amounts transferred from general reserves or other designated funds to match expenditure on projects as defined by the board and senior management team.

15 Movement on unrestricted funds (continued)

Purpose of designated funds

Fixed assets – To identify net funds held as fixed assets (net of long-term loans used to finance fixed assets) used in the charity's operations which are not therefore available to fund short-term expenditure.

Autism Education Trust – To fund the continuing development of the work of the Autism Education Trust in addition to that funded by the DfE.

Capital Investment Fund – To allocate exceptional gains and proceeds from asset sales to finance future major capital projects.

Pension reserve – Represents the theoretical net deficit on the defined benefit pension schemes as calculated using FRS102 methodology. See note 21 for further details.

15 Movement on unrestricted funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Capital transfers £'000	Loan £'000	Actuarial gains £'000	Other transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2024 £'000
General fund	7,246	91,227	(91,255)	(174)	(281)	—	(717)	6,046
<i>Designated funds:</i>								
· Fixed assets	20,637	—	—	174	281	—	—	21,092
Autism Education Trust	1,696	1,433	(1,609)	—	—	—	—	1,520
Local Authority Pension Scheme Reserve	175	—	—	—	—	—	(175)	—
Total designated funds	22,508	1,433	(1,609)	174	281	—	(175)	22,612
Total unrestricted funds excl pension reserve	29,754	92,660	(92,864)	—	—	—	(892)	28,658
Pension reserve	(3,775)	—	(179)	—	—	1,270	892	(1,792)
Total unrestricted funds	25,979	92,660	(93,043)	—	—	1,270	—	26,866

16 Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2025 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Fixed assets	29,674	162	29,836	24,463
Net current assets	6,081	4,267	10,348	11,942
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(5,212)	-	(5,212)	(5,057)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	-	-	-	(1,792)
Net assets including pension liabilities	30,543	4,429	34,972	29,556

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Fixed assets	24,463	—	24,463
Net current assets	9,252	2,690	11,942
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(5,057)	—	(5,057)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	(1,792)	—	(1,792)
Net assets including pension liabilities	26,866	2,690	29,556

17 Operating lease commitments

	Property		Other leases	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Operating leases which expire:				
Not later than one year	2,255	2,559	467	570
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,932	7,131	1,083	475
Later than five years	5,824	2,872	-	10
	16,011	12,562	1,550	1,055

In 2024-25 payments on operating leases was £3,133k (2023-24: £3,829k).

Commitments as Lessor

On 1 November 2021, NAS entered into a 20-year lease for the Anderson School.

The total of future minimum lease receipts (for Group and Charity) under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Within one year	1,006	939
Between one and five years	4,228	4,894
In five years or more	14,079	14,018
	19,313	19,851

18 Capital commitments

Capital commitments as at 31st March 2025 are £520k (2023-24: £589k).

19 Taxation

The charity's activities are exempt from taxation under the *Corporation Tax Act 2010*.

20 Information regarding employees and Trustees

Staff employed calculated on a full time equivalents (FTE) during the year was:

	2025 FTE	2024 FTE
Footing the Bill	-	30
Transforming Lives		
. Education	408	476
. Social and independent living support	1,021	1,388
. Other charitable activities	191	115
Changing attitudes		
. Other charitable activities	32	9
Behind the scenes	154	163
	1,807	2,181

The average number of employed staff in the year was 2,265 (2023-24: 2,374).

Staff costs comprise:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Gross wages and salaries	57,703	57,023
Agency staff	5,768	6,856
Social Security costs	5,191	4,896
Pension costs	2,700	2,419
Total	71,362	71,194

20 Information regarding employees and Trustees (continued)

During the year, £317k (2024: £824k) was paid out in termination payments to staff. All obligations were identified and met during the financial year. There were no payments outstanding or accrued at the balance sheet date.

The number of senior staff paid over £60,000 during the year (salary and taxable benefits excluding pension contributions) was as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	24	20
£70,001 - £80,000	16	4
£80,001 - £90,000	5	6
£90,001 - £100,000	4	3
£100,001 - £110,000	3	2
£110,001 - £120,000	4	5
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-
£130,001 - £140,000	-	-
£140,001 - £150,000	1	1
	58	41

The number of senior staff to whom retirement benefits are accruing are as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Defined contribution schemes:		
NAS Stakeholder Scheme	41	28
Defined benefit schemes:		
Teachers' Pension Scheme	16	12
Total	57	40

Further details of all NAS pension schemes are shown in note 21.

The senior management team is made up of 7 directors (2024: 7) led by the Chief Executive Officer. The employment benefit of the team was £903k (2024: £1,100k).

No Trustee or person related or connected by businesses to them, has received any remuneration from the charity during the year (2024: none).

Six trustees and national forum members (2024: three) were reimbursed expenses during the year totalling £1,748 (2024: £1,612). This principally represents reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending Trustees' and national forum meetings. During the year, Trustees made donations to the charity amounting to £nil (2024: £408).

The charity purchased insurance costing £22k (2024: £13.9k) to protect the Trustees and Directors from loss arising from liability for negligence, default or breach of trust or duty, other than a breach committed in reckless disregard of whether or not the act or omission was such a breach.

There were no related party transactions in the year other than the inter-company transaction disclosed in note 8.

21 Pension commitments

The National Autistic Society operates both defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes for the benefit of its employees.

Defined benefit pension schemes

The disclosures below relate to the funded liabilities within the London Borough of Brent Pension Fund (Brent Scheme) and Somerset County Council Pension (Somerset Scheme), which are part of the Local Government Pension Schemes. The NAS participates in the schemes which provide defined benefits, based on members' final pensionable salary.

Alongside the above pension schemes, the NAS also contributes to the national, statutory teachers, pension funds on behalf of its teaching staff. See details below.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Teaching staff employed by the NAS are eligible for membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, which is a national, statutory contributory, unfunded defined benefit scheme administered by the Teachers' Pension Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education and Skills. Pensions costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of the Government Actuary. The NAS has 68 active members (2024: 62). At the point of becoming independent from NAS, NAS AT has 35 active members (2024: 35 active members).

Every five years, the Government Actuary conducts an actuarial review of the scheme, using normal actuarial principles. The cost of pension increases is excluded from the valuation and consequently neither teachers nor employers contribute to this added value, which is met directly by the Exchequer. NAS Employer's contributions in the year totalled £1,054k (2024: £798k).

In accordance with FRS102 disclosure of certain information concerning assets, liabilities, income and expenditure relating to pension schemes is required. This information is set out below.

Brent Scheme

Contributions

The employer's regular contributions to the Brent Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2025 were £892,000 (2024: £892,000).

Assumptions

The latest actuarial valuation of the NAS's liabilities took place as at 31 March 2021. The principal assumptions used by the independent qualified actuaries in updating the latest valuation of the scheme:

21 Pension commitments (continued)

Brent Scheme (continued)

Principal financial assumptions

	Brent Scheme	
	2025	2024
	% p.a.	% p.a.
Rate of general increase in salaries	3.10	3.10
Rate of increase to pensions in payment (CPI)	2.80	2.80
Discount rate	5.80	4.80

Principal demographic assumptions

	2025	2024	2025	2024
	Males	Males	Females	Females
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)	21.4	21.5	24.1	24.2
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently 45)	22.4	22.5	25.3	25.4

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet

	31 March	31 March
	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	23,663	23,121
Present value of liabilities	21,350	24,913
Capping of asset (see below)	(2,313)	-
Net pension assets / (liabilities)	-	(1,792)

The net asset is not considered likely to be realised in the foreseeable future and so is not recognised on the balance sheet.

Analysis of income and expenditure

	31 March	31 March
	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Period ending		
Interest cost	1,169	1,167
Expected return on assets	(1,105)	(994)
Expense recognised on SOFA	64	173

21 Pension commitments (continued)**Brent Scheme** (continued)

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Opening present value of liabilities	24,913	25,089
Current service cost	-	—
Interest cost	1,169	1,167
Contribution by participants	-	—
Actuarial gains in liabilities	(3,655)	(272)
Estimated benefits paid out	(1,077)	(1,071)
Closing present value of liabilities	21,350	24,913

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Opening fair value of assets	23,121	21,017
Expected return on assets	1,105	994
Actuarial gains (losses) on assets	(378)	1,289
Contribution by employers	892	892
Contributions by participants	-	—
Net benefits paid out	(1,077)	(1,071)
Closing fair value of assets	23,663	23,121

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Actual return on assets		
Expected return on assets	1,105	994
Actuarial gains (losses) on assets	(378)	1,289
Actual return on assets	727	2,283

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Analysis of amounts recognised in STRGL*		
Total actuarial gains (losses)	954	1,561
Total gains (losses) in STRGL	954	1,561

* STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses).

21 Pension commitments (continued)

Brent Scheme (continued)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2021 £'000
Fair value of assets	23,663	23,121	21,017	21,516	19,637
Present value of liabilities	21,350	24,913	25,089	33,228	35,143
Surplus (deficit)	2,313	(1,792)	(4,072)	(11,712)	(15,506)

History of experience gains and losses

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2021 £'000
Experience gains (losses) on assets	(378)	1,289	(961)	1,235	3,134
Experience gains (losses) on liabilities	(3,655)	(272)	(8,012)	(2,273)	6,884

Somerset Scheme

Contributions

The employer's regular contributions to the Somerset Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2025 were estimated to be £nil. Estimated contributions for 31 March 2025 are £nil.

Principal financial assumptions

	2025 % p.a.	2024 % p.a.
Rate of general increase in salaries	3.95	3.90
Rate of increase to pensions in payment (CPI)	2.95	2.90
Discount rate	5.70	4.85

Our estimate of the duration of the employer's liability is 16 years.

Principal demographic assumptions

	2025 Males	2024 Males	2025 Females	2024 Females
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)				
Retiring today	21.1	21.1	23.0	23.0
Retiring in 20 years	22.4	22.4	24.4	24.4

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet.

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	4,210	4,274
Present value of liabilities	(3,282)	(3,603)
Capping of pension asset (see below)	(928)	(671)
Net pension asset	-	—

21 Pension commitments (continued)**Somerset Scheme** (continued)

The net asset is not considered likely to be realised in the foreseeable future and so is not recognised on the balance sheet.

Analysis of income and expenditure

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Service cost	19	18
Net interest on the defined liability (asset)	(32)	(15)
Administration expenses	3	3
(Income) / expense recognised on SOFA	(10)	6

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Opening present value of liabilities	3,603	3,667
Current service cost	19	18
Interest cost	171	171
Contributions by participants	5	5
Change in financial assumptions	(324)	(20)
Change in demographic assumptions	(9)	(52)
Experience loss / (gain) on defined benefit obligation	(8)	10
Net benefits paid out	(175)	(196)
Closing present value of liabilities	3,282	3,603

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Opening fair value of assets	4,274	3,964
Expected return on assets	109	504
Administration expenses	(3)	(3)
Contribution by participants	5	5
Net benefits paid out	(175)	(196)
Closing fair value of assets	4,210	4,274

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Actual return on assets	109	504
Expected return on assets	-	—
Actuarial (losses) gains on assets	109	504
Actual return on assets	109	504

21 Pension commitments (continued)**Somerset Scheme** (continued)

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000
Analysis of amounts recognised in STRGL*		
Total actuarial gains	257	374
Total gains in STRGL	-	-

* STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses).

History of assets, values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March 2025 £'000	31 March 2024 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2021 £'000
Fair value of assets	4,210	4,274	3,964	4,163	4,007
Present value of liabilities	3,282	3,603	3,667	5,466	5,686
Surplus (deficit)	928	671	297	(1,303)	(1,679)

Defined contribution scheme

Scottish Widows Group Personal Pension Scheme. This group personal pension scheme is the NAS's main scheme, comprising auto-enrolment and enhanced schemes. The scheme is administered by Scottish Widows. There are currently 1,640 active members in auto-enrolment and 111 active members in our enhanced scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the NAS. Pension costs charged in the SOFA represent the contributions payable by the NAS in the year. Employer's contribution for the year totalled £1,623k (2024 £1,601k).

22 Custodian funds

As at 31 March 2025 NAS held funds on behalf of service users totalling £675k (2024: £882k) as Custodian Trustee. The funds are held in bank accounts separate from the funds of NAS. The funds are not included in these financial statements and they are segregated clearly from those belonging to NAS itself at all times.

23 Post Balance Sheet Events.

In August 2024 the Charity exchanged contracts on the sale of a property which was no longer required. The sale completed in September 2025. Proceeds were £2m, but there was no significant gain on disposal.

24 Comparative information

Analysis of income and expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2024 between restricted and unrestricted funds:

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	2024 Total funds £'000	2023 Total funds £'000
Income & endowments from:					
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>					
<i>Transforming lives:</i>					
. Education		25,387	—	25,387	28,330
. Social and independent living support		52,236	—	52,236	49,762
. Other charitable activities		6,850	—	6,850	7,264
<i>Changing attitudes</i>					
. Other charitable activities		88	—	88	77
Donations and legacies	1	6,351	2,750	9,101	13,292
Other trading activities	2	79	—	79	92
Investment income		623	—	623	325
Other Income		1,046	—	1,046	
		92,660	2,750	95,410	99,142
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		1,769	—	1,769	1,993
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>					
<i>Transforming lives</i>					
. Education		24,252	21	24,273	30,538
. Social and independent living support		57,994	338	58,332	58,413
. Other charitable activities		8,601	2,687	11,288	11,943
<i>Changing attitudes</i>					
. Other charitable activities		427	73	500	635
Total	3	93,043	3,119	96,162	103,522
Removal of NAS AT		—	—	—	19,521
Total expenditure		93,043	3,119	96,162	123,043
Net expenditure	7	(383)	(369)	(752)	(23,901)
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	21	1,270	—	1,270	11,527
Net movement in funds		887	(369)	518	(12,374)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total fund balances brought forward at 1 April 2023	15-16	25,979	3,059	29,038	41,412
Total fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2024	15-16	26,866	2,690	29,556	29,038

The National Autistic Society is here to transform lives, change attitudes and create a society that works for autistic people.

We transform lives by providing support, information and practical advice for the 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their three million family members and carers. Since 1962, autistic people have turned to us at key moments or challenging times in their lives, be it getting a diagnosis, going to school or finding work.

We change attitudes by improving public understanding of autism and the difficulties many autistic people face. We also work closely with businesses, local authorities and government to help them provide more autism-friendly spaces, deliver better services and improve laws.

We have come a long way but it is not good enough. There is still so much to do to increase opportunities, reduce social isolation and build a brighter future for people on the spectrum. With your help, we can make it happen.

Find out more at:

www.autism.org.uk