AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales · Charity number 517954

Details

Other names	NOTTINGHAM REGIONAL SOCIETY FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN WITH AUTISM, THE NOTTINGHAM REGIONAL SOCIETY FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN AND ADULTS, NORSACA
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	02053860
Registered	1986-09-19
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate Morven Street Creswell Worksop S80 4AJ
Phone	01909506678
Email	enquiries@aem.org.uk
Website	www.autismeastmidlands.org.uk

Activities

Objects: To improve the quality of life for people on the autism spectrum and their families, by providing an environment where they are recognised, understood and valued, as well as providing the support and services they need throughout their lives. To improve the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum by responding to their needs, enabling them to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Activities: WE PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL, RESIDENTIAL AND DAY SERVICES TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN WHO ARE AFFECTED BY AN AUTISTIC-SPECTRUM DISORDER, OR A RELATED CONDITION. IN ADDITION, WE PROVIDE AN ADVICE SERVICE, AS WELL AS PLAY AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Disability
- **Who:** People With Disabilities

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND THE ADJACENT/NEIGHBOURING COUNTIES
- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£17,892,000	£16,819,000	£11,753,000	467
2024-03-31	£15,959,000	£14,413,000	£9,700,000	409
2023-03-31	£14,368,368	£15,036,456	£6,827,797	369
2022-03-31	£15,089,923	£14,438,016	£-3,172,115	432
2021-03-31	£12,610,973	£11,841,661	£-8,174,022	411

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Robert Charles Jack Woodford	Chair	2018-10-04
Colin Lee Goodbody		2026-05-15
Dorothy Mary Perkins		2024-12-05
GEORGE JAMES SMITH		2012-09-26
Jeffrey Cheung		2024-12-05
PAUL PARR		2020-12-02
PETER JULIAN PIMM		2024-12-05
Richard William Bell		2019-12-10
Ross David Levy		2023-03-16
Sian Rebecca Booth		2026-05-15
TERENCE RAYMOND OUSLEY		2013-03-06

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AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales - Charity number 517954

Accounts

Annual Review
2024 - 2025

AEM
Autism East Midlands



Supporting Autistic People
Promoting Independence

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE

Welcome

to Autism East Midlands



Robert Woodford

Chair of Trustees

It is a privilege to introduce this Annual Review and to reflect on another year of resilience, progress and impact across Autism East Midlands.

I would like to begin by offering my sincere thanks to George Smith, whose tenure as Chair of Trustees came to an end during the year. George gave his time and expertise generously, guiding the charity with integrity and purpose, including through the significant challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. I am pleased that he remains on the Board as Vice Chair, where his experience and insight continue to be of great value. On behalf of the organisation, I thank him for his leadership and for the strong foundations he leaves behind.

This review demonstrates the breadth and quality of our work, and the positive difference it continues to make to autistic people and their families across the region. However, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the increasingly difficult context in which this work is delivered. Ongoing pressures arising from national policy decisions, constrained funding settlements and workforce challenges continue to place significant strain on the social care and education sectors. Demand for support is rising, while the systems designed to fund and commission that support are becoming ever more complex and restrictive.

Reading this report, I am struck by the dedication, professionalism and compassion evident across the organisation, and it is a source of real pride. Delivering high-quality, person-centred support in the face of these challenges would not be possible without the commitment and resilience of our staff who are incomparable. They deserve our thanks and deep appreciation.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees, along with our volunteers, fundraisers, supporters and partners, for their continued guidance, generosity and commitment throughout the year.

As we look ahead, the Board is firmly focused on the successful delivery of our new five-year plan. Developed collectively and grounded in our values, this strategy sets a clear direction for the organisation and provides a framework for sustainable growth, effective governance and continued improvement in outcomes for autistic people and their families.

We have now begun implementing this plan, and the Board will take a role in overseeing its delivery, ensuring that ambition is matched by responsibility and that quality remains at the heart of every decision we make. We do so with confidence in the organisation's leadership, and in the commitment, skill and values of the people who bring this work to life each and every day.

About AEM

We provide support to families across the region from Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire through to Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.

Our services include:

- Residential support and supported living
- Flexible day services
- Respite support
- Employment coaching
- Family support hubs
- Specialist education at Sutherland House School
- Parent workshops and Autism Awareness training

While we've grown, our support is still very much led by the people we support. We strongly believe that every individual has the right to live with choice, independence and dignity.



Jane Howson

Chief Executive Officer

We're proud of all that we've achieved in 2024-2025, and with our new strategy in place, it was a period where we were ableto reflect on our successes as well as charter our course for the future ahead.

It's vital for us to ensure that what we offer is meeting the needs of the people we support but is also sustainable in the coming years and developing the scope of what we do.

It was also a time to review what we set out to do in our 2020-2025 Strategy Plan – no small feat, coming out of COVID times – before looking to the future.

In our 2020 – 2025 strategy, we aimed to:

- **Amplify the voices** of autistic people
- **Ensure continued improvement** of the quality of our services
- **Provide ample evidence-based support** through partnerships and training resources
- **Focus on maximum impact** by investing into the development of services, including employment and social opportunities for autistic individuals

As evidenced by the stories in this review, our strategy paid off; and these achievements enable us to open up new services and build upon existing provisions.

We're excited to unveil some of our projects in the pipeline, like our Old Fire Station day service, our Training Centre, a new social enterprise and of course, our school in Braithwell, all of which will be open by the time of our next Annual Review in 2025-2026.

Keep your eyes peeled. We have a lot of exciting things on the horizon, and our teams are working extremely hard to keep the momentum going and ensure that every penny raised in support of Autism East Midlands is making the world a better place for autistic people.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Adult Services

Living Well, With the Right Support

In this section we will share stories from the people we support and key achievements from our residential, respite and day services.

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE

Day *services...*

Our stories of success, developing skills and newfound independence, will look different depending on the service user. Support needs, just like people, are diverse.

For one individual we support, it may be going out to their local cafe with support in managing their anxiety. For another, it may be learning how to count pennies or use a computer for the first time, adapting to the ever-changing digital world we live in.

When we talk about positive outcomes, our person-centred approach means that every outcome will be unique to the individual - and we wouldn't have it any other way.



Nurturing creative talents

One of the joys of working in day services is that we're constantly amazed at the talents of the people we support.

Hamilton service user Zin has been doing creative crafts with her Support Worker Jurgita. With Jurgita's support, Zin has been able to explore her creative talents from a safe and calming place, and we're so proud of her talents in drawing and crafts.

Pictured right is a drawing that Zin did of her Hamilton staff members as cartoon characters, with Laura O'Halloran taking centre-stage as Belle from ***Beauty and the Beast****.*





Pickle *me this...*

The Sherwood Centre has recently branched out into a new enterprise: producing pickled onions and red cabbage.

Building on this exciting development, the Horticulture Team decided to take the project one step further by pickling produce they have grown themselves.

The horticulture programme at the service is built around the full lifecycle of growing fresh vegetables—from preparing soil and sowing seeds to nurturing plants, harvesting crops, and now processing and preserving the produce. Throughout this process, individuals develop a wide range of practical skills and horticultural responsibilities, such as plant care, tool handling, garden maintenance, and understanding seasonal growing patterns. These hands-on learning opportunities not only increase confidence and independence but also foster problem-solving, teamwork, time management, and responsibility for living plants.

By taking their home-grown vegetables and learning how to pickle and package them for sale, participants are now transferring their horticultural skills into a small enterprise. They gain experience in food preparation, following step-by-step processes, maintaining hygiene standards, and working safely—skills that further build independence and open doors to future vocational opportunities.

Introducing this new enterprise to their already well-managed horticulture projects has created an additional income stream for the service. The funds raised will be reinvested into the horticulture programme for the next financial year, supporting new tools, seeds, equipment, and learning opportunities.





Travel *Training*

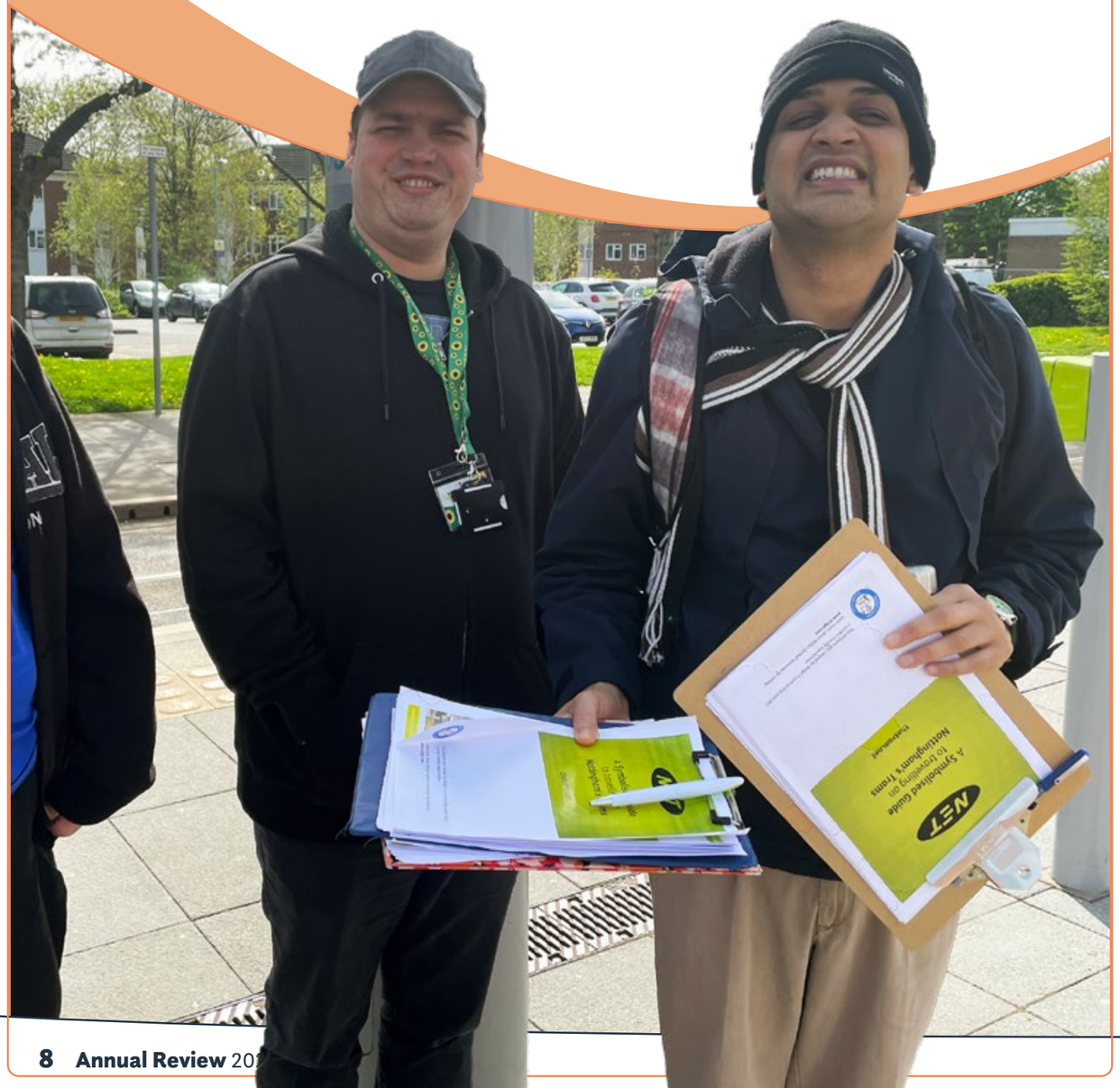
Scott, Daniel and Ali from our Hamilton service did some travel training on the Nottingham tram.

The training involved learning how to use travel cards, how to call for help if they need it and pressing the bell to get off.

Public travel spaces can be areas of concern for some autistic people, as public transport has many changing variables that can cause anxiety.

- *Noise levels*
- *Number of people around*
- *What times the trams arrive*
- *What to do in case of delays*
- *Where to go*
- *Walking or commuting to/from the station*

This is just one of the ways that we help our service users gain the skills and confidence to live with independence and choice.



Volunteering

Rachel's favourite place in the world is the local charity shop.

Her goal was to volunteer, learning step-by-step how to do the work independently without the support of our staff.

Working to achieve her desired outcomes, the team at Dukeries helped Rachel to set small steps to help her progress in the right direction but also make sure that it wasn't overwhelming.

Starting small, she began doing ten minutes of volunteering each week, allowing her to build this up over time.

Rachel now works for a full hour and a half each week, and she is still working on developing this further.

You can see Rachel beaming as she proudly shows off her certificates with Support Worker Paige in honour of Volunteers Week.

Everyone at our Dukeries centre is so proud of how far Rachel has come and how much she has achieved.





Building boxes *and birdhouses*

Ben at our Sherwood Centre spent a lot of time in the woodwork area building a box for his collection of mini-cars, until he finally finished it.

Later in the year, many of the people we support at the Sherwood Centre put their new woodworking skills to the test when they built a birdhouse together, which now sits proudly at the centre.

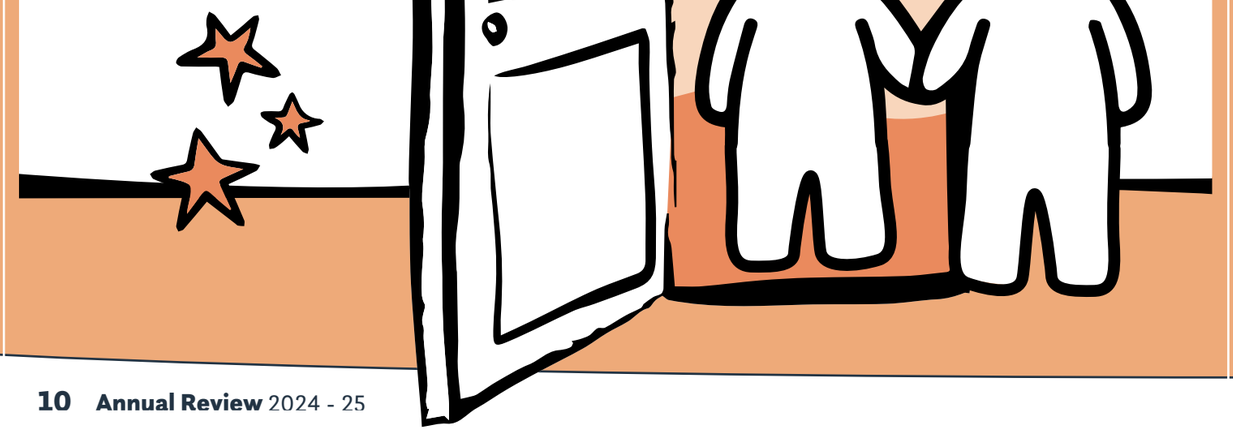


Residential *services...*

Our residential services are designed to help people gain the skills they need to become more confident, independent and achieve the desired outcomes that are important to them and their families.

Our staff have continued to deliver an exemplary service which takes into account person-centred support as well as community-based engagement and activities.

57
people have been supported through residential services



Experiencing new things

Alan has achieved some amazing first time experiences in the past 12 months that we would all take for granted.

Bowling used to be hard for Alan, the noise, smells and food (which he loves) would be too much for him and he would become distressed.

Thanks to the dedication of our teams and Alan`s willingness to work with us, we have seen this be the year Alan makes some huge steps towards more meaningful engagement and independence.

Bowling? No issues here, Alan has been successfully engaging in this activity without distress following the team taking some small steps to work towards this outcome.

Some people do not think twice about a nice pint in their local pub. For Alan this can be very difficult when you consider the sensory impact of the different smells and noise.

Not only has Alan been to his local pub for a pint with his staff team he has also eaten a lovely meal there in celebration of his birthday.

This has been a year of outcomes for Alan, he has engaged in bowling, visiting the local pub and has been out shopping for his food without distress or incidents.



Andy's progress *to independence:*

Andy has been very open with staff about wanting to increase his independence.

He would eventually like to live in a supported living setting with a reduced level of direct support from staff. Andy worked with his staff team to devise a number of outcomes he could work towards that would be vital for independent living – these largely focused on managing his own finances and administering his own medication.

Andy told us:

"I have learned how to administer medication and how to record medication with staff support and guidance, this has included me learning more about adverse reactions and why I take medication. The things I have learned are the times I take my medication, I will inform staff myself when it is time to take my 6pm medication, how much medication I take and what I take them for and I count the medication that is in my boxes and sign the recording sheet to evidence how many tablets I have taken and how many tablets I have left.



Staff have also been helping me with my finances; they are supporting me to count amounts of money so I will count change that I bring back with me when I spend money. I have started to carry my money with me instead of staff doing this for me. The next thing I want to achieve is to download an online banking app so I can keep my card on me instead of cash."

Andy's independence is really important to him. The outcomes he wants to achieve are all things well within his grasp, and those who know him well can already see how much more confident he is. With consistency, a little bit of guidance and encouragement from staff, Andy has already learned so much on his independence journey so far and his enthusiasm for continuing learning is infectious!





Respite *services...*

Our Whitegates respite service has gone from strength to strength as it enters its third year since being established. In that time, it has become a lifeline for the families of many service users, who can feel supported in the knowledge that our trained, qualified staff are able to support their loved ones in times of need.



42

people have been supported through respite service

Emma's *first stay*

Emma had just turned 18 when she came to our Whitegates respite service for the first time.

During her stay she enjoyed playing games, cooking and working on her independence skills such as selecting what foods she'd like to eat.

Our staff were so touched when Emma wrote us a lovely letter about her stay.



The staff at whitegates made my first stay really enjoyable. The staff were good at checking to see how I felt and I had free choice on my food and activities. The night staff were really good when I didn't feel okay. All the staff engaged in conversations with me and treated me like I was not a child. The staff will always stay until your problems are sorted.

I have got a positive relationship with Jade, Kelso, Demi, Gemma, Nicola, Stacy, Rachel & Lisa they have all made me feel Comfy staying here and I can't wait to stay again.

Emma.

Driving for *success*

Lucy and Emma's story...

Nothing makes us smile more than seeing the people we support achieve their outcomes.

Lucy wanted to learn how to drive, allowing her more independence and ability to perform tasks in her day-to-day life.

Our team at Whitegates supported Lucy, who was later thrilled to find out that she had passed her driving test.

Staff presented Lucy with a card which read 'Bye bye L plates! Hello road trips!'

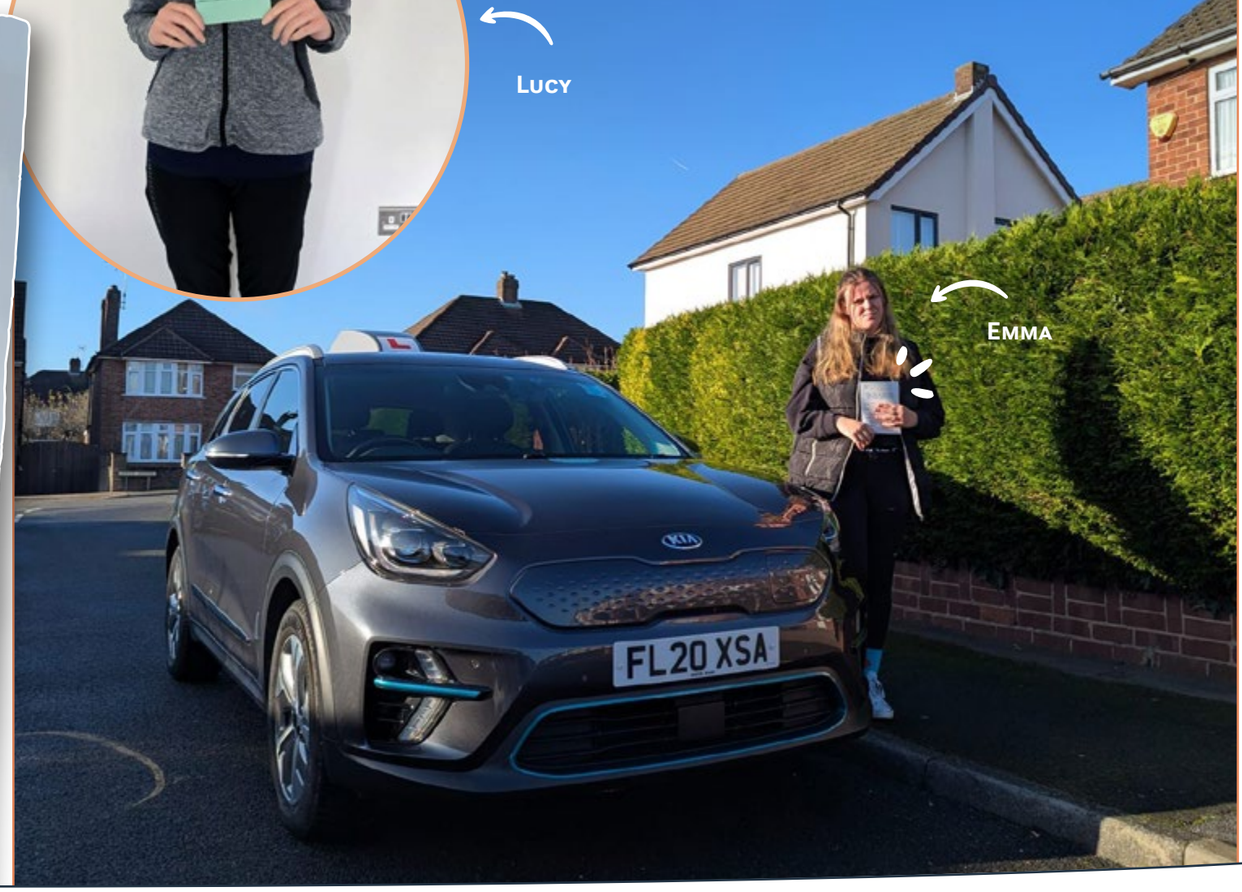
While we were proud of Lucy and her efforts, staff at Whitegates were surprised to find that her sister Emma, who also attends Whitegates, wanted to learn to drive as well!

Like her sister, Emma was also successful in passing her test with support from our team.

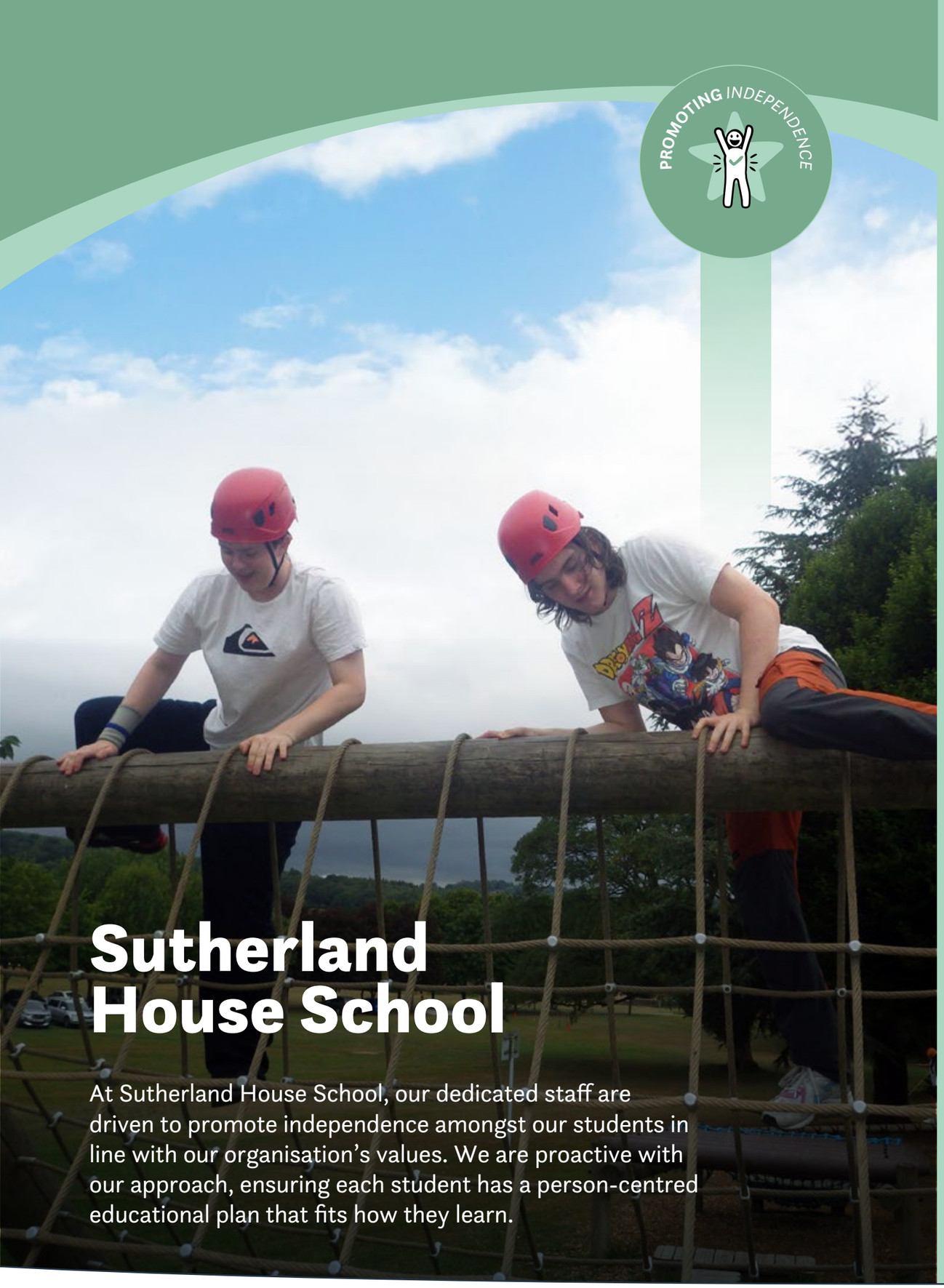
We're so proud of the two sisters for taking these important next steps to independence.



Lucy



Emma



Sutherland House School

At Sutherland House School, our dedicated staff are driven to promote independence amongst our students in line with our organisation's values. We are proactive with our approach, ensuring each student has a person-centred educational plan that fits how they learn.

Sutherland *House School*



Positive *Social Sessions*

Exploring the highs and lows of social media.

Sutherland House School students attended a Positive Social session, which explored both the benefits and risks of social media.

A key highlight was a video demonstrating how easily personal information can be accessed through social media accounts. Students also examined real-life examples of the consequences of posting without careful consideration.

Dan emphasised how venting frustrations on gaming platforms can have serious repercussions, potentially affecting future careers and, in some cases, leading to legal trouble.

The session also addressed the impact of online bullying and the importance of reporting harmful content to a trusted adult, school staff, or through social media and gaming platform reporting tools.

Throughout the session, students participated actively, offering thoughtful insights and engaging positively in discussions, and we're pleased to know that our students will be able to stay safe when going online.

These sessions were a vital part of ensuring that our students were feeling safe and confident when browsing independently online.





Christmas *play*

Special 'Lion King' Christmas play features original student artwork and performances

Sutherland House School students performed their Christmas play which was inspired by the Lion King.

The performance was the result of months of planning from both staff and students, and included dozens of props from wildebeest masks to meerkat costumes.

Everything from banners to masks to set pieces were crafted and designed by the students with support from staff.

Here is some of the high praise we received from parents after the performance:

"All the students were amazing, well done so proud of you all"

"The students were absolutely wonderful and have worked extremely hard, proud of all of them."

"We're so proud of all the students! You all worked so hard and had so much fun too!"







One year later: *Marchant House Training Centre*

In our last Annual Review, we shared the news that we had recently launched our training centre for Sutherland House students to learn valuable independent living skills.

One year later, we're proud to share that our students have developed a range of skills from regular visits to our Marchant House in Chilwell, learning the fundamental basics of domestic skills such as cooking, cleaning or gardening.

While these skills may be taught in a classroom, our Marchant House centre offers the unique benefit of providing a ready-made domestic setting for students to become immersed in the day-to-day tasks that are required when running a household.

As a result, older students can leave us with key foundational knowledge that will support them and allow them to be independent as they enter adulthood.

In the Spring and Summer, our staff can educate our students on tasks such as mowing the lawn or moving the top soil of a garden to get it ready for summer.

Students can also practice acts such as preparing their own lunch or cooking a dinner, within the safety of a supported learning environment.

The creation of the training centre was made possible thanks to a grant of £30,700 awarded from the Wolfson Foundation to Autism East Midlands. The building itself was donated to Autism East Midlands by the late Eric Kenneth Marchant, and is named after him.

Many students have walked away with an ASDAN Independent Living qualification from their time at Marchant House, and we sincerely believe this gives them the best possible start as they move into a more independent adulthood.



Exploring interests: *Horse Riding & Gymnastics*

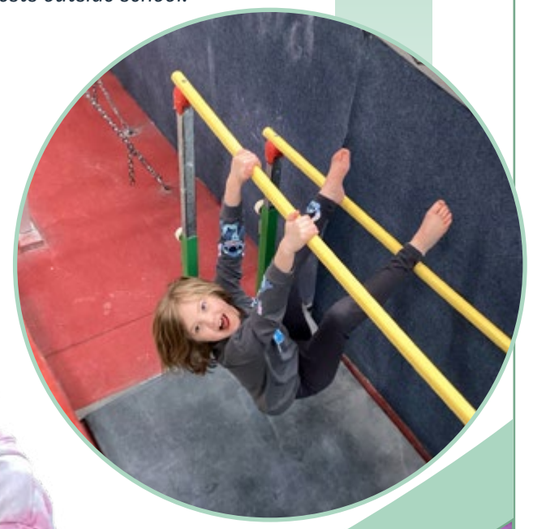
Learning doesn't always take place in a classroom.

We recently announced a partnership with the Belvoir Vale Riding for the Disabled Association to deliver weekly horse-riding sessions for our students, some of whom had their very first rides in these sessions.

Students from our purple pathway also did weekly gymnastic sessions at Robin Hood Gymnastics.

We introduce these activities because we really, truly strive for individualised support for students based on their needs and desired outcomes.

Introducing these experiences, especially at an early age, helps to ease anxieties when faced with new activities and offers opportunities for them to independently pursue these interests outside school.





Sneinton *Centre*

Sutherland House students helped transform Sneinton Community Centre to get them ready for Christmas.

In December, students from one of our older classes opted to do some work experience at Sneinton Community Centre, committing to every week over six weeks.

They had a variety of jobs to do including:

- *Clearing the outside grounds*
- *Taking photos and videos for social media*
- *Preparing and putting up Christmas lights and decorations*

Careers Lead Farheen Khan said:

"Students have really embraced the experience to develop and reflect on their employability skills as part of their careers education program. Many thanks to Sneinton Community CIC for giving our students them this unique work experience opportunity."

Through teamwork and putting their efforts into it, the community centre had a festive, revitalised look, just in time for Christmas!



Work *Experience*

Emelie, who is interested in costume design and fashion, completed work experience at the Theatre Royal.

Emelie has a keen interest in costume design and fashion, so she was thrilled when she was invited to join the Wardrobe department of the Theatre Royal in Nottingham.

Emelie's work experience took place while TV's fashionista Gok Wan was performing his new pantomime at the venue, also featuring comedian Paul Chuckle and comedy ventriloquist Steve Hewlett among other theatre stars.

Over two days, Emelie was given a behind-the-scenes look at theatre life and the hard work that goes on backstage to make the magic happen.

She was involved in the redesign of one of Gok Wan's costumes. She even got to meet the man himself!



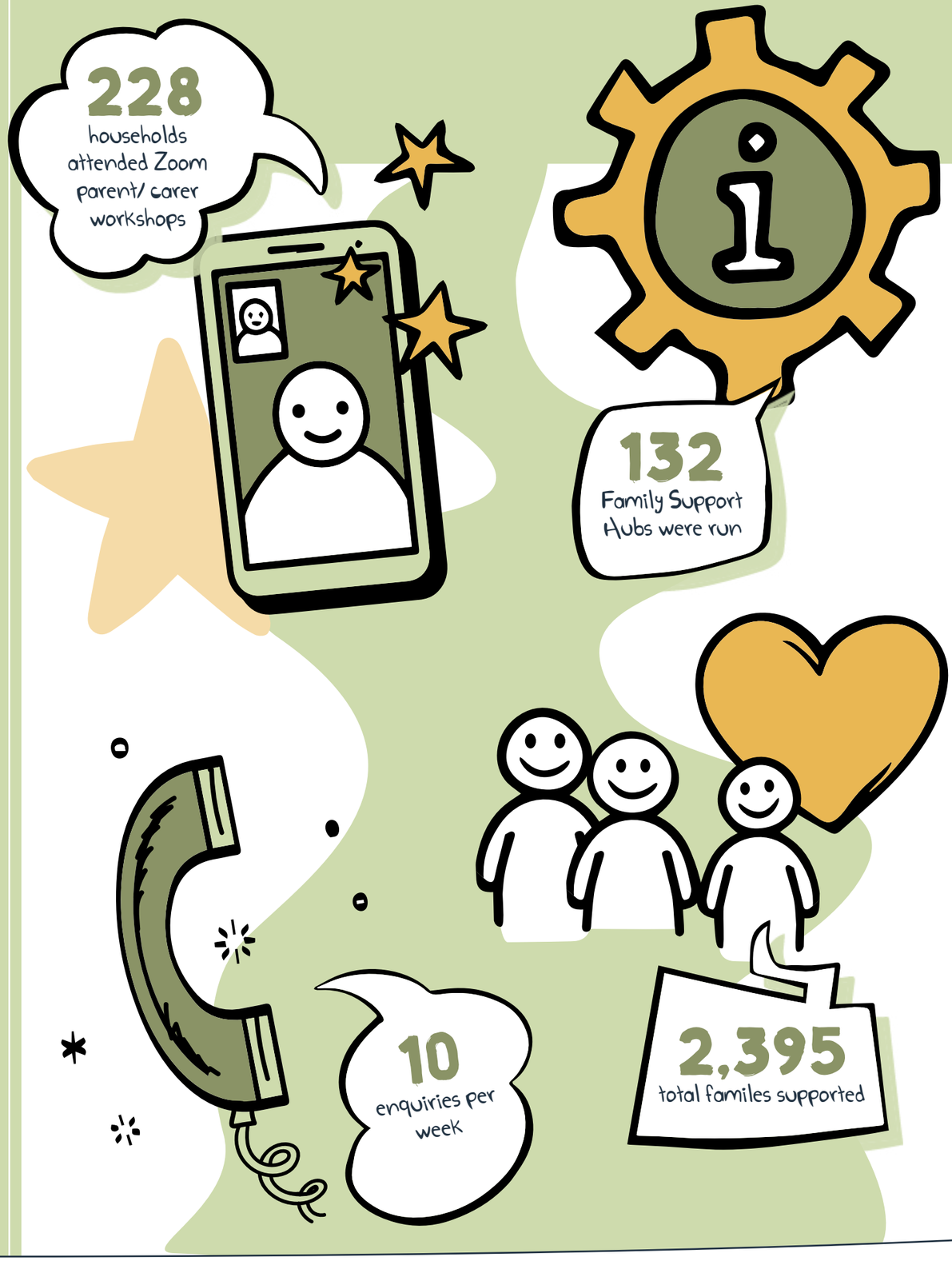


Children's Services

Independence Through Learning & Growth

In this section we will share stories from our Family Support Hubs, which are monthly meet-ups for families that take place across the East Midlands including:

- Nottinghamshire
- Derbyshire
- Lincolnshire
- Leicestershire
- Northamptonshire



Margaret's *story*

"I have an autistic grandson, so I wanted to widen my knowledge of autism"

For National Volunteers Week, we wanted to celebrate the vital work that our volunteers do and share some words from one of our dedicated Family Support Hub volunteers.

Margaret, who sought out volunteering roles following her retirement, was reading the local paper when she found the request for volunteers at our monthly hub in Northampton.

"As the grandmother of an autistic grandson I was keen to spend time with other families in similar circumstances and to widen my knowledge of autism.I have been introduced to some amazing families and have gained so much from hearing their stories of resilience and determination to find the best opportunities for their children."

After speaking with Children and Families Service Manager Lesley Lock, it was clear that Margaret would be a great fit to support the monthly hub, which provides a safe and comfortable space for families of children with autism.

"I have been warmly welcomed and discovered that is what is often needed is a cup of tea, a listening ear and a safe and inclusive environment for the children. I help to set up the hub and to pack away at the end but the best part is interacting with the children and talking to parents or grandparents. I always leave knowing that all the children had a good time and I look forward to next month."



Family *Support*

Autism East Midlands received ***£500*** *from Newark and Sherwood District Council to support our Newark-based Family Support Hub.*

Our Newark Family Support Hub was awarded £500 as part of the Newark & Sherwood District Council Community Lottery Fund.

The Community Lottery Fund allows local charities and good causes to register with a chance of receiving a prize every week, under the criteria that it must be a cause that benefits Newark and Sherwood District and its residents.

When Lesley Lock, our Families Manager, registered for the draw right before Christmas, she had no idea they would select our Newark Family Hub as a winner!

These funds will go towards purchasing more toys, fidgets and lights for sensory play and other activities.

These meet-ups usually take place on the first Saturday of the month at the St Giles Community Hall.



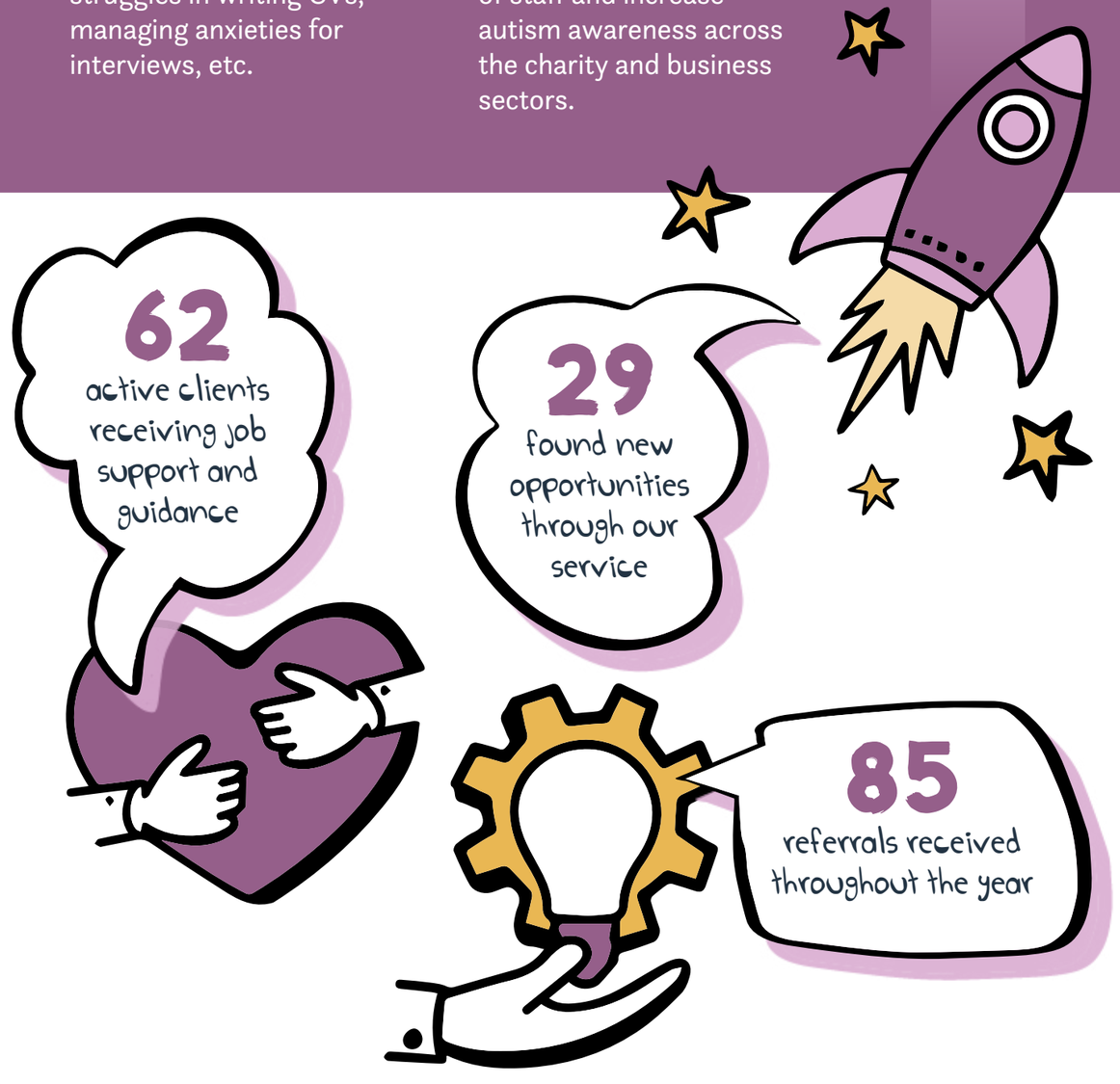
Feedback from a Worksop hub attendee

"I just wanted to say my son really enjoyed himself, he even gets upset when he isn't going to see his best friends for a while! I felt Kerry really connected with everyone."

Employment & Training

In this section we will share stories from our employment and training teams, where we deliver support to tackle two main issues affecting autistic people:

- Navigating the barriers that autistic people face in employment, such as struggles in writing CVs, managing anxieties for interviews, etc.
- Ensuring employers have the tools they need to support autistic members of staff and increase autism awareness across the charity and business sectors.



Nadine's *Story*

Nadine uses the Autism East Midlands employment service with dreams of finding a job where she can write. She describes her experiences as an autistic person and how our employment service has helped her.

'My name is Nadine Acharki, I am an autistic adult, and this is the story of me.

I was bullied in primary school, by my peers and even my teachers, just because I am different. The way I act in situations, the way I stim when I'm nervous or how I'm sensitive to certain sounds. To other people, that's strange. When I left primary school, I was cyberbullied online by people from my primary class, and the bullying didn't stop when I went to secondary.

I was made to feel like I was made wrong, like an experiment went wrong, a Frankenstein or like a polar bear in a rainforest trying to find its way back to its cold home and back to its own, but I couldn't, no matter how hard I tried. I never found a way to make myself fit in.

It felt like people hated me. As I spent 5 years in that school, I felt out of place and I always felt so different it hurt because no one understood me. I was bullied and picked on, I was told "Nadine, they are teasing it'll stop" but it continued until I reached year 11 and finally left that horrible place.

When I got to college, I felt like I fit much better and I met new people and I felt like I didn't have to hide who I was. I started to wear clothes that made me stick out from other people. I started to act differently too and I was much happier.

I never found a way to make myself fit in.

In the course that I did for two years from 2022 to 2024, I wrote a lot about autism because I'm so passionate about it and I am very educated in what autism is. It makes me happy to talk and write about it because it's so interesting to talk about.

'Without autism, I wouldn't be me.'

I am 21 now and I am happy, I wish I could go back in time and tell my younger self that she will make it and she will be happy. She just has to work harder than others and be strong.

I discovered Autism East Midlands through my work coach who tries to help me get a job. I have been struggling to get an interview at least, so he introduced me to Autism East Midlands and told me they can help me.

I called them, then I scheduled an appointment with Oliver and we had a lovely talk. He is helping me a lot to try and get a job and even sending me writing jobs which is something I want to pursue in life and to be my full time job.

So, I am Nadine Acharki and I am autistic.

Without autism, I wouldn't be me.'



Employment *support*

"I have settled into my role and feel happy with the job."

A has recently settled into her new role as an Autism Practitioner at Autism East Midlands, but before this, she sought the help of Autism East Midlands' employment service to help her find a suitable role for her.

She shares her story and hopes to encourage others to seek out the service if they are struggling with finding work or in navigating some of the challenges of getting a job as an autistic jobseeker.

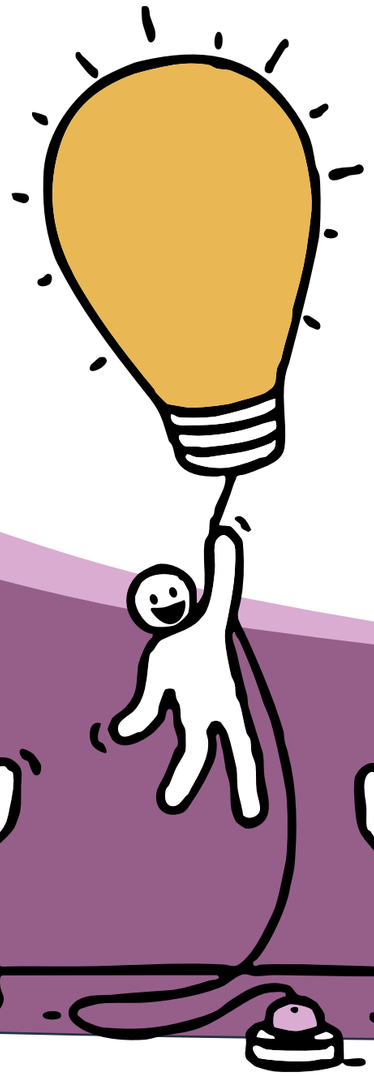
"I have worked with Oliver at AEM since July 2023. We spent time at first looking at job roles that might interest me and any barriers that may need to be overcome to be successful in a role.

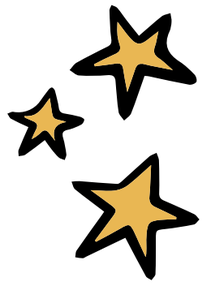
We looked at my CV and worked on interview technique and prepared potential interview question answers.

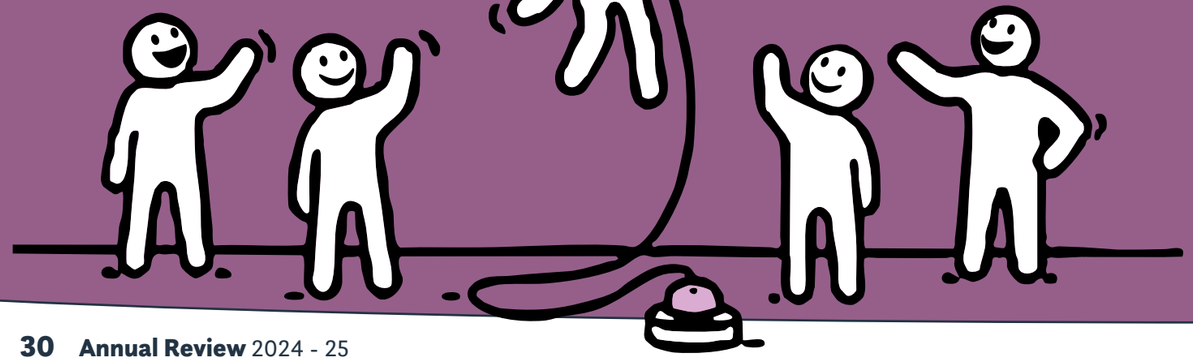
Oliver helped me to look for suitable job roles and eventually we applied to Autism East Midlands to work as an autism practitioner. Oliver attended the interview with me, and I was successful in getting the role. Oliver came to the beginning of training for the role to show where I would be training and to introduce me to the trainer. He was even able to come and find me when I got lost finding the venue in the snow!

I have settled into my role and feel happy with the job. Oliver has kept in touch offering help where necessary. He was able to help me complete my Care Certificate spending time going through all of the paperwork. I would advise any autistic jobseekers to reach out to Autism East Midlands employment services as they work with you to reach and maintain employment."

This testimonial has been posted anonymously at the request of the service user.









Training

We truly believe that the world can be a more understanding and accepting place for autistic people.

That's why we offer full and half-days of Autism Awareness Training packages, delivered by our skilled and talented trainers who really understand autism.

We believe this helps to have important conversations around autism and how we can support autistic people, both in the workplace and in our wider communities.

Training *Statistics...*

246
full days of training

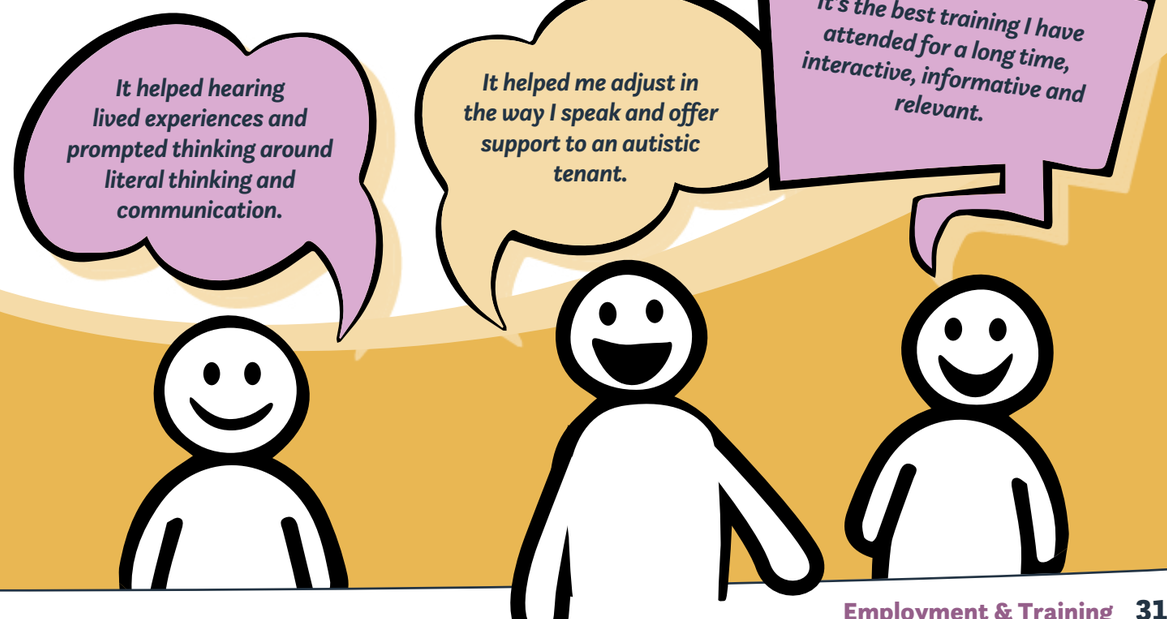


Feedback *from Training:*

It helped hearing lived experiences and prompted thinking around literal thinking and communication.

It helped me adjust in the way I speak and offer support to an autistic tenant.

It's the best training I have attended for a long time, interactive, informative and relevant.



Our Team

In this section, we share the stories of the people that make all of this incredible work possible. Our staff.

We want to thank every staff member at Autism East Midlands, whether you have been with us for years or started this year, for your dedicated work and support.



Kerry's *Story*

"It's the most rewarding job there is." Kerry's story to Dukeries Assistant Manager.

In June, we welcomed Kerry Phillipson to Autism East Midlands as our new Assistant Manager at our Dukeries day service.

Thinking back to when she was looking to change jobs, Kerry eventually decided to apply at Autism East Midlands after hearing the experience of a former colleague that had joined AEM as a Support Worker.

Speaking about the change she saw, she said:

"There was a massive difference. I could see how happy he was. There was no lack of support. He wasn't frustrated or worried. He was allowed to progress, to work his way up."

When we asked Kerry about her experience, she spoke at length about the breadth of roles that she has worked in health and social care sector.

Kerry has 18 years experience in the sector which includes titles such as Support Worker, Senior Support Worker, Team Leader and now Assistant Manager. She says that this gives her a thorough understanding of what a job in this field can be like, and the impact that it can have on staff.

"I think when you don't enjoy your job, you don't do it very well. But at Autism East Midlands I can phone literally anyone, everyone offers help if things are difficult or busy. On my second day in my role, I attended an Assistant Managers meeting, where anyone could raise any issues they were having.

That's what I was looking for. I was looking for a place where you work as a team."

Kerry Phillipson, Assistant Manager, Dukeries



"I think when you don't enjoy your job, you don't do it very well. I was looking for a place where you work as a team."

Proud *to Care*

AEM staff made finalists in 'Proud to Care' awards

Two staff members were made finalists at the 'Proud to Care' awards led by Nottinghamshire County Council. Irene Spokes (Autism Practitioner) and Matt Riley (Painter & Decorator) were nominated for their efforts.

Irene, who works at our Carlton Road residential service in Worksop, was nominated in the Residential care category.

Her nomination read:
"Irene goes above and beyond to ensure people enjoy various activities, including a memorable holiday to Butlins last year. Her enthusiasm is contagious, positively impacting both her team and the wellbeing of the people we support."

Matt won his category for Office & Operational Staff. His nomination read:

"Matt is so much more than a painter and decorator. He takes time to get to know the people we support, and Matt's understanding of autism has made renovation and decoration accessible and empowering."





"Matt's understanding of autism has made renovation and decoration accessible and empowering."

Nickita's *Story*

"It feels like a bit of a dream." Nickita's story from Support Worker to Gardening Lead.

When Nickita joined our Mundy Street day service in 2022, she thought that she had found the perfect life balance.

While working for us as a Support Worker, Nickita was also raising twin boys on the spectrum and taking care of her impressive collection of indoor plants.

Nickita came to work at Autism East Midlands over two years ago, when she had decided that her job as a hairdresser was no longer a good fit for her.

She attended a local jobs fair at a leisure centre in Heanor, where she learned about Autism East Midlands and was told that she could apply to become a Support Worker.

"I'd never done care work before," she admits, "but with two boys on the spectrum, I knew a little bit about autism."

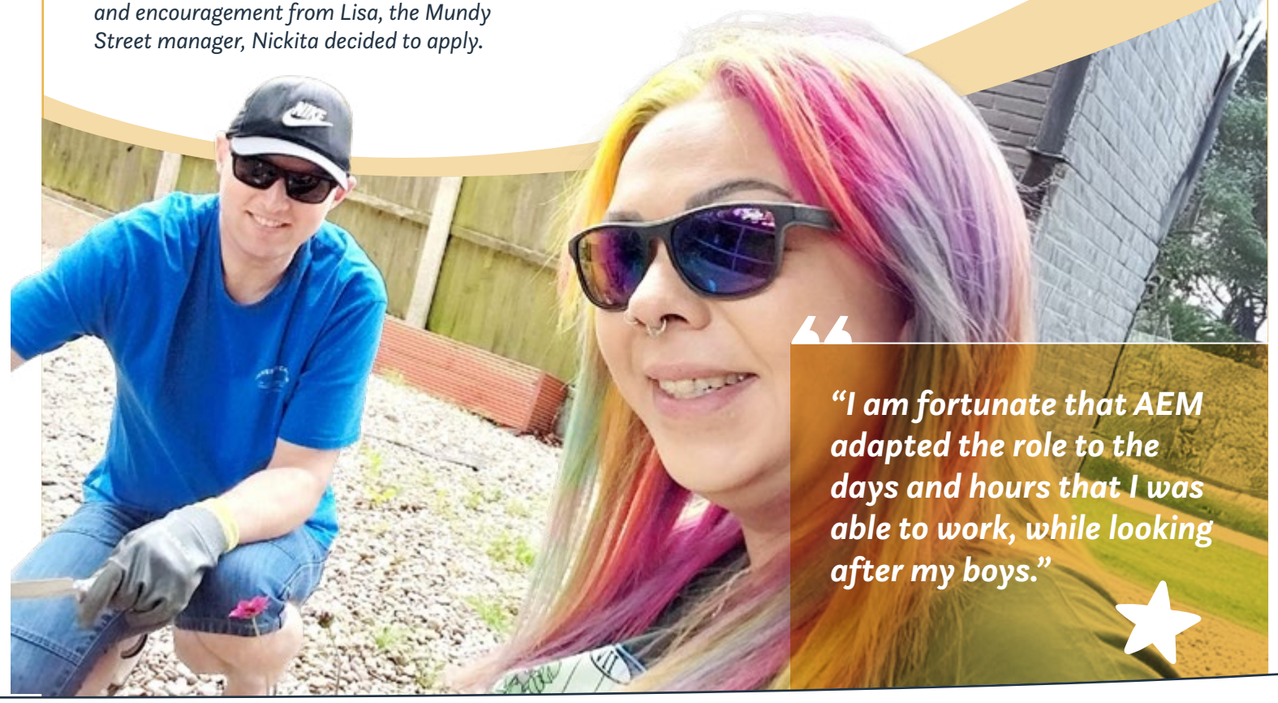
Thankfully, she describes the staff at Mundy Street as very welcoming and lovely to work with. Meanwhile, Nickita continued to cultivate her gardening passions at home.

When the Gardening Lead role became available, Nickita was initially unsure if the role would fit around her childcare responsibilities, but after a few conversations and encouragement from Lisa, the Mundy Street manager, Nickita decided to apply.

Nickita was offered the position and has since travelled across many of our East Midlands sites, from her local Mundy Street service in Heanor to our Fairview & Lynton residential service in Nottingham, to our headquarters in Creswell.

She describes the benefits that our garden spaces can have on our service users.

- ***Calming.*** *When senses get heightened, our outdoor spaces allow our service users the space to reach a calmer state of mind.*
- ***Being one with nature.*** *Many of our service users have an interest in being outdoors. Sometimes they enjoy growing vegetables, or sometimes they like flowers or plants. A well-tended landscape will have a positive effect on service users who enjoy nature and want to spend more time in it.*
- ***Evoking the senses.*** *Nickita describes how she has a fondness for quirky plants, and has discovered plants that smell like cola bottles, or lemon sorbet, and how she has even discovered White Strawberry plants that taste like pineapple. For service users with their own particular interests and tastes, this is a very useful skill to have!*



"I am fortunate that AEM adapted the role to the days and hours that I was able to work, while looking after my boys."

Thank You!

In this section, we'd like to take the chance to say thank you to all our fundraisers, supporters and donations, big and small, that we've had the pleasure of seeing throughout the year.

Through the many wonderful fundraisers, we are able to continue doing the work that we're proud of and keep working towards our vision for a world that recognises, values and understands autistic people.



Caitlin's *Story*

First time flyer takes skydive for Autism East Midlands

Caitlin was flying high as she undertook a skydive to support autistic people across the East Midlands.

When Caitlin chose to do a skydive, there was a reason that this was a significant milestone for Caitlin.

This was not only Caitlin's first time doing a skydive, but also the first time she had ever been in a plane before.

Caitlin took her skydive on 23 October and has raised £455 for Autism East Midlands to-date.

Speaking before the skydive, she spoke of how her brothers had autism, which is why she wanted to support the charity.

Family member Keith told how Caitlin "didn't show a trace of nerves and enjoyed every moment."

Well done Caitlin and thank you for your generous support!



Christmas *Raffle*



*Tesco Christmas raffle raises over **£300** for Mundy Street*

Staff and service users from Mundy Street were overjoyed to visit their local Tesco to pick up local funds raised via Christmas raffle.

Vicky, Lucy and service user Sam went down to their local Tesco in Heanor to collect a donation that amounted to £310.96, which was raised for Mundy Street day service through a local Christmas raffle.

They also donated two Christmas hampers, which Mundy Street then gave away as prizes in their own raffle to raise extra funds.

We want to thank everyone involved in raising these funds. Lisa, Service Manager at Mundy Street, shared how staff were planning on using the funds to purchase a new greenhouse for those we support at day service to continue their gardening and outdoors learning skills.

Toyota *Donation*

*Toyota Charitable Trust donates **£3,000** to Mundy Street*

We were thrilled this year to accept a £3,000 donation from the Toyota UK Charitable Trust to support our Mundy Street day service in Heanor.

Service manager Lisa Bradbury and Kelly Carrington, Head of Operations and Safeguarding, attended a celebration event to accept the cheque on behalf of Autism East Midlands.

The funds have since supported a new sensory garden at Mundy Street which has helped us create a calming area and assist with the sensory needs of the people we support.



London *Marathon*

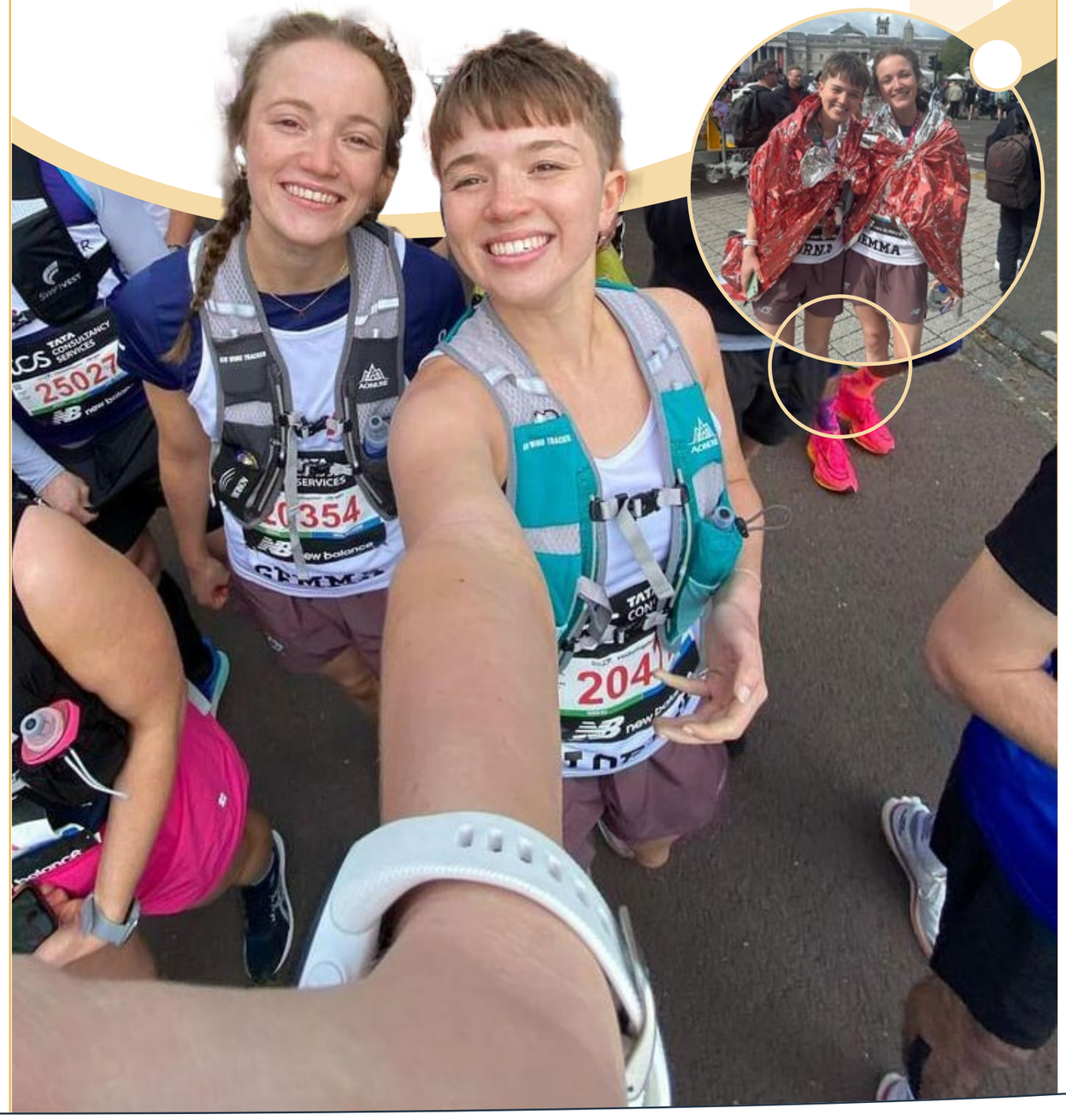
Runners race in London Marathon for AEM

On Sunday 21 April, 8 runners took on the challenge to run the London Marathon to raise money for Autism East Midlands.

The 8 runners tackled the 26.2 mile route, which went by some of London's most iconic buildings such as Tower Bridge, Tower of London, Canary Wharf and Buckingham Palace.

One of the 8 runners was former Mansfield Town and Chesterfield player and coach, Gary Roberts.

Thank you to everyone who ran for us this year, which raises vital funds for our work and allows us to continue to run our services that benefit families across the East Midlands.



B&Q *Donation*

Sherwood Centre awarded £5000 in funds for new greenhouse.

Our Sherwood Centre day services were awarded £5000 from the B&Q Foundation for a brand-new greenhouse that service users can enjoy.

When our Sherwood Centre staff heard about the B&Q Foundation, who were looking to award grants that made a positive difference in our local communities, they began looking towards the service's garden.

Many service users at the Sherwood Centre enjoy spending time in the garden, including growing their own vegetables and plants. That was when Jo Brown, Service Manager at the Sherwood Centre, came up with the perfect outdoor project for the centre.

Looking at the polytunnel that the people we support used for gardening, the staff realised that this was ten years old and opted to replace this with a new greenhouse to enable more space and a better environment for their users.

The greenhouse that they selected was 17ft wide and 8ft tall.

Service users even got involved, assisting staff in building a base for the greenhouse out of decking boards. The installation team said it was one of the best bases they had built a greenhouse on.

The greenhouse was finally installed on Friday 31st January and service users were thrilled and happy to enjoy this brand-new space for all their gardening ventures.

Huge thank you to all who assisted in this project including Lisa Currie (Gardening Lead), Hayley Dickins (Woodwork Lead) and all the service users in the horticulture and woodwork groups: Ben, James, Sarah, Jordan, Ethan, Jordan and Matthew.

Just in time for spring and the start of the growing season!



Special Thanks *To:*

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all individuals, organisations, and groups who have generously supported us throughout 2024 and into 2025. Your contributions have made a significant impact on our work and the lives of those we support.

College Pines Golf Club

Mr & Mrs Pearson

Mr & Mrs Clarke

Guilder Foundation

Toyota

Bernadette Bulmer

Henry Akers

Robin Hood Masons

London Marathon (8 runners)

Beeston School

Heanor Tesco Xmas Raffle

Keiron Sheridan

Chris Pienaar

Newark & Sherwood District Council

Gilander

Pronto Rugby

Matlock Athletic Club

B&Q Foundation

Toyota – Charitable Trust

Southwell Freemasons

DHU Healthcare

Derbyshire Community Football Club

Sage Publications

Dave (Manchester Marathon)

Amy (Manchester Marathon)

James Doble

Ross and Katie Levy

Gary Roberts

Oliver Markham

Christy Plumbing & Heating

DAB Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd

Amelia-Jayne Meakin

Northampton Care Home

West Notts College Students

Beeston Voices Youth Choir

Charles, Stefan and the Backwards Marathon team

K Marchant Estate







What comes next?

While we want this Annual Review to celebrate our achievements over the last year, we also want to give you an idea of some of the exciting projects that are coming up, and that we'll be able to share in greater detail in the next Annual Review.

1. Opening of our new Sutherland House School in Braithwell
2. Ace Popcorn, our brand-new social enterprise
3. Launching our Old Fire Station day service
4. Relaunch of our Strive group for autistic staff
5. Establishing a new Training Centre for Autism Awareness Training
6. Unveiling our new Strategy plan for 2025 - 2030



What Comes *Next?*



ACE POPCORN









Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Trustees
K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan (resigned 6 September 2024)
P Parr
R D Levy
D M Perkins *(appointed 5 December 2024)*
S D Barnes *(resigned 3 May 2024)*
C L Sharpe *(resigned 3 May 2024)*
J Cheung *(appointed 5 December 2024)*
S D Freeborn *(appointed 5 December 2024)*
L J Hall *(appointed 5 December '24, resigned 15 May '25)*
P J Pimm *(appointed 5 December 2024)*

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office:
Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate,
Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop,
Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditor:
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor Cubo Birmingham 4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX

Bankers:
Lloyds Bank Plc
4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the group and company for the year ended 31 March 2025. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charity's strategic objectives. These activities are undertaken to further the charitable purposes for the public benefit. The Trustees are confident that the charitable aims satisfy the principles of public benefit as defined in the Charities Act 2011, section 4.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our mission

To advocate, provide and develop high quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Our well trained and passionate staff offer a wide range of services to help individuals to live their lives the way they want.

In this Strategic Plan AEM is restating its commitment to supporting autistic people and their families and carers at all stages of life.

Strategic priorities

Our priorities for the next five years are as follows:

Our Priorities for Young People are:

- To expand our current educational offer by opening new schools across the East Midlands supporting autistic children and young people.
- Ensure all students leaving our school are supported to have a positive outcome destination by ensuring we start preparing for the next steps in life at an earlier age. We will look at new ways of supporting young people to become successful adults.
- To offer young people a place to live that meets their autism needs.
- To provide a short breaks service so that young people and their families can get a break and enjoy spending time apart.

Our Priority for Young People who are becoming adults is:

- To put in place a Transitions Team that supports young people from 16 to 25. This support would start in our school and work with the young person into adulthood.

Our Priorities for working age adults are:

- Develop a range of living solutions to meet the developing needs of our residents and others.
- To improve the employment rate amongst autistic people by establishing a Social Enterprise that provides paid employment for autistic adults.
- To offer apprenticeships within AEM that are reserved for autistic employees.
- To further develop our short breaks offer enabling more adults to experience the opportunity for a change of environment.

Our Priorities for Older Adults are:

- Develop our understanding of the future needs of older service users, by ensuring all adults have a person centred review.
- Ensure older adults in our care have access to appropriate accommodation that supports their needs.
- Ensure older adults have access to a range of activities that support their interests.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

a. Review of activities and key performance indicators

The year ended 31 March 2025 represents another year of strong financial performance and operational progress for Autism East Midlands. Building on the transformational improvements achieved in the previous year, the charity has continued to demonstrate effective stewardship of its resources whilst maintaining its focus on delivering high-quality services to autistic people and their families.

Financial Performance

The charity achieved an operating surplus of £1,073k for the year, demonstrating continued financial stability and effective cost management. This surplus provides the foundation for strategic investments in service development and quality improvements whilst maintaining appropriate reserves for future sustainability.

Both of our subsidiary companies performed strongly, with Sutherland House (Trading) Limited generating profits of £1,084k and Norsaca (Trading) Limited achieving profits of £1,104k. These profits were gift aided to the main charity, reflecting our commitment to maximising resources available for charitable purposes.

Service Development

Following the successful acquisition of The Old Rectory in the previous year, we have continued to progress our expansion plans. The development of the Old Fire Station represents another significant milestone in our service expansion, providing additional capacity to meet growing demand for our specialist services.

We have strengthened our workforce by adding new skillsets in the form of a social enterprise lead, reflecting our commitment to developing innovative approaches to supporting autistic people into employment. We have also provided robust support for the next generation of leaders in Adult Services, ensuring continuity of high- quality leadership across our organisation.

Our education services continue to thrive, with sustained demand for specialist provision that meets the unique needs of autistic children and young people. The quality of our educational outcomes remains high, with students achieving meaningful qualifications and developing essential life skills.

Workforce Development

Investment in our workforce remains a strategic priority. During the year, we continued to enhance our training programmes and professional development opportunities, ensuring our staff are equipped with the latest knowledge and best practices in autism support.

Our commitment to becoming the employer of choice in our sector is evidenced by our continued focus on creating supportive working environments that attract and retain high-quality professionals who share our values.

b. Factors relevant to achieve objectives

AEM continued to be a specialist autism service provider. This specialism is what makes our services so successful in meeting the needs of autistic people.

The organisation has benefited significantly from the legacy received from the estate of Eileen Burley, which has provided both financial stability and opportunities for strategic development. This transformational gift has enabled us to think ambitiously about expanding our services whilst maintaining the highest standards of care and support.

c. Investment policy and performance

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

As we embark on our new 5-year strategy, our investment strategy remains important in ensuring we can deliver sustainable growth whilst maintaining financial prudence.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b. Reserves policy

Autism East Midlands takes a risk-based approach to the setting of reserves. The objective of this policy is to provide a level of working capital that protects the continuity of the charitable objectives, provide a level of funding for unexpected opportunities and to provide cover for unforeseen risks.

The biggest mitigation against catastrophic loss calling on reserves is the fact that AEM has a very diverse service offer and is commissioned by multiple local authorities.

The levels of restricted and unrestricted funds is monitored and shared with Trustees on a monthly basis.

c. Surplus

A surplus of £1,073k has been achieved in the year (2024: surplus of £1,546k). This comprises an operating revenue surplus of £1,103k (2024: £1,640k) less defined benefit pension scheme costs of £30k (2024: £94k), resulting in a final operating surplus of £1,073k (2024: £1,546k).

Additionally, there was a defined benefit pension scheme actuarial gain of C980k (capped due to asset ceiling restrictions) (2024: gain of £1,327k), bringing the total net movement in funds to £2,053k (2024: £2,873k).

The group had total funds of £11,753k as at 31 March 2025 (2024: £9,700k), consisting of £133k restricted funds (2024: £146k) and £11,620k unrestricted funds (2024: £9,554k). Unrestricted funds include a designation of £352k (2024: £381k) from the legacy of Eileen Burley which has been set aside for employment and social enterprise. Free reserves stood at £2,443k (2024: £2,155k), representing approximately two months of operational expenditure coverage (2024: 2 months).

d. Material investments policy

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

e. Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks across our services continue to be the inflationary pressure on wages and utilities not matched by a rise in fee rates from local authorities.

Whilst National Living Wage levels continue to rise very significantly, most local authorities have not agreed to mirror this increase with sufficient uplift. After more than a decade of limited increases, we are finding the de facto cuts in funding increasingly difficult to sustain in adult social care. Some services are coming very close to not achieving full cost recovery and some care packages are already at that point.

The significant increase to Employers' National Insurance announced during the year has created additional financial pressures across all our services. Combined with forthcoming changes to employment legislation, these factors present ongoing concerns about the sustainability of current funding arrangements.

We continue to work closely with local authorities to develop sustainable funding arrangements that recognise the true costs of delivering high-quality autism services.

f. Material risk management objectives and policies

Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking to make a wide range of cost savings whilst maintaining service quality.

g. Principal funding

The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the DfE.

Autism East Midlands were the beneficiaries of a large legacy from the estate of Eileen Burley in the prior year. The Trustees agreed to designate this funding to support the expansion of our employment support offer and to develop a social enterprise that will enable the employment of more autistic people.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

a. Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

Details of Trustees are listed on page 1. The management of the Group and the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Memorandum of Association.

c. Organisational structure and decision-making policies

During the year under review, the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee
- Adult Scrutiny Sub Committee
- Development and Enterprise Sub Committee
- Standards and Governance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and non-residential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

d. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

e. Pay policy for key management personnel

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 10 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in Note 11 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 25.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff, this year whilst most staff received a second pay rise this was not applied to anyone in a management position. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past, a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain high calibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

f. Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop additional educational provision in different counties. Following the successful development of facilities including the Old Fire Station, we have exciting developments planned including the launch in 2026 of a new school and other services planned over the coming years.

Our social enterprise development represents a particularly exciting opportunity to create meaningful employment pathways for autistic people whilst generating sustainable income streams for the charity.

We remain committed to developing innovative service models that respond to emerging needs within the autism community, particularly focusing on employment support and independent living services.

Since the year end, we have continued to strengthen our service provision and explore new opportunities for growth. Details of significant post balance sheet events are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements..

Members' liability

The Members of the Charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the Charity in the event of winding up.

Engagement with employees and employment of the disabled

Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them by means of regular consultative committee and staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The Group and the Charity carry out exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and have adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees.

The group and the company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of employment matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are under-represented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Trustees' Responsibilities
Statement

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

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 Group and the Charity and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, 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 of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, was appointed by the Trustees as part of an open tender process.

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, has indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditor at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

R Woodford

Trustee

Date: 18/09/2025

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial activities, the Consolidated balance sheet, the Charity balance sheet, the Consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant 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 of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 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 in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Group's or the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve 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.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual 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.

Opinion 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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 Group's and the parent 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 Group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our assessment focused on key laws and regulations the company has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, employment law and relevant tax legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities. Our approach to detecting irregularities included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the charitable company and how the charitable company is complying with that framework, including agreement of financial statement disclosures to underlying documentation and other evidence;
- obtaining an understanding of the charitable company's control environment and how the charitable company has applied relevant control procedures, through discussions with Trustees and other management and by performing walkthrough testing over key areas;
- obtaining an understanding of the charitable company's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- reviewing meeting minutes of those charged with governance throughout the year; and
- performing audit testing to address the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also considered the likelihood of detection of fraud based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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.

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. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members 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 and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Kevin Hodgetts FCA (Senior statutory auditor)
for and on behalf of
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor
Cubo Birmingham
4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square
Birmingham
B3 3AX

Date: 17 October 2025

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities
(incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

		Unrestricted Funds 2025	Restricted Funds 2025	Total Funds 2025	Total Funds Restated 2024
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	3	103	34	137	461
Charitable activities	5	4,154	98	4,252	3,695
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings		13,440		13,440	11,756
Investments	6	15		15	9
Other Income	7	48		48	38
TOTAL INCOME		**17,760**	**132**	**17,892**	**15,959**
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings		11,251		11,251	9,458
Charitable activities	8	5,423	145	5,568	4,955
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**16,674**	**145**	**16,819**	**14,413**
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES)		**1,086**	**(13)**	**1,073**	**1,546**
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	26	980		980	1,327
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**2,066**	**(13)**	**2,053**	**2,873**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		9,554	146	9,700	6,827
Net movement in funds		2,066	(13)	2,053	2,873
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**11,620**	**133**	**11,753**	**9,700**

Consolidated Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2025

			2025		2024
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14		8,898		7,078
			8,898		7,078
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	16	1,834		2,444	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,762		4,405	
CURRENT LIABILITIES		**6,596**		**6,849**	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(2,539)		(1,924)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**4,057**		**4,925**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**12,955**		**12,003**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(1,202)		(1,353)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION ASSET/ LIABILITY			**11,753**		**10,650**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26				(950)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**11,753**		**9,700**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	19		133		146
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension provision	19	11,620		10,504	
Pension reserve	19	-		(950)	
Total unrestricted funds	19		11,620		9,554
TOTAL FUNDS			**11,753**		**9,700**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

R Woodford, Trustee

Date: 18/09/2025

The notes on pages 20 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

Charity Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2025

			2025		2024
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14		8,898		7,078
			8,898		7,078
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	16	4,563		5,385	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,581		1,246	
		6,144		6,631	
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	**(2,087)**		**(1,706)**	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**4,057**		**4,925**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**12,955**		**12,003**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(1,202)		(1,353)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION ASSET / LIABILITY			**11,753**		**10,650**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26				(950)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**11,753**		**9,700**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds:	19	133		146	
Total restricted funds	19		133		146
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds:	19	11,620		10,504	
Unrestricted funds excluding pension provision	19	11,620		10,504	
Pension reserve	19	-		(950)	
Total unrestricted funds	19		11,620		9,554
TOTAL FUNDS			**11,753**		**9,700**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

R Woodford, Trustee

Date: 18/09/2025

The notes on pages 20 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2025

		2025	2024
		£000	£000
Cash flows from operating activities (note 21)			
Net cash used in operating activities		2,890	3,308
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		3	518
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,389)	(404)
NET CASH (USED IN) / PROVIDED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES		**(2,386)**	**114**
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Repayments of borrowings		(147)	(141)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES		(147)	(141)
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		**357**	**3,281**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**4,405**	**1,124**
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR		4,762	4,405

The notes on pages 20 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in the United Kingdom. The address of its registered office is given on the Charity Information page.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity.

The significant accounting policies that have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

1.3 Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves held by the Group to be able to continue as a going concern.

1.4 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset class and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Charity's accounting policies.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Charity which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.7 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable activities are costs incurred by the company in the delivery of its activities undertaken to further the purposes of the company, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Group's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the bases outlined below.

At each reporting date the company assesses whether there is any indication of impairment. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined to be the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	-	2% - 10% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	10% - 100% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulations are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.9 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Consolidated statement of financial activities.

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.10 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Consolidated statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.11 Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The profits of the subsidiary undertakings are gift aided to Autism East Midlands.

1.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.13 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.14 Creditors and provisions

Creditors are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

1.15 Government grants

Government grants relating to tangible fixed assets are treated as deferred income and released to the Consolidated statement of financial activities upon the completion of the relevant performance- related conditions. Other grants that are not subject to performance-related conditions are credited to the Consolidated statement of financial activities as the grant proceeds are received. Grants received prior to the revenue recognition criteria being satisfied are recognised as a liability.

1.16 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the Trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

1.18 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND AREAS OF JUDGEMENT

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The Charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 26, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 March 2025. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

Critical areas of judgement:

The assessment of the useful economic lives and the method of depreciating fixed asset requires judgement. Depreciation is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities based on the useful economic life selected, which requires an estimation of the period and profile over which the Charity expects to consume the future economic benefits embodied in the assets.

The classification of expenditure between restricted and unrestricted funds is considered a critical area of judgement as certain expenditure can be applied to both funds. Where this is the case, the expenditure is apportioned to both funding streams on an appropriate basis.

3. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025
	£000	£000	£000
Donations	103	34	137

Effective 1 December 2024, **Derbyshire Autism Services Group** merged with **Autism East Midlands**. Upon merger, Derbyshire Autism Services Group assets and liabilities transferred to Autism East Midlands and Derbyshire Autism Services Group ceased to operate as an individual entity. Donations above include net assets of £98k transferred from Derbyshire Autism Services Group upon merger.

	Unrestricted funds 2024	*Restricted funds 2024*	*Total funds 2024*
	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Donations	*45*	*36*	*81*
Legacies	*380*		*380*
Total 2024	*425*	*36*	*461*

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - NET INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of results pre-distribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £1,084k (2024: £1,328k). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £1,104k (2024: £428k - restricted by loss brought forward).

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	*Unrestricted funds Restated 2024*	*Total funds Restated 2024*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income	6,737	6,737	*5,757*	*5,757*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income	6,702	6,702	*5,999*	*5,999*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses	(5,652)	(5,652)	*(4,429)*	*(4,429)*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses	(5,599)	(5,599)	*(5,029)*	*(5,029)*
	2,188	2,188	2,298	2,298

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	*Unrestricted funds Restated 2024*	*Total funds Restated 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Residential	2,873		2,873	*2,722*	*2,722*
Day services	648		648	*674*	*674*
Respite	577		577	*287*	*287*
Other services	56	98	154	*12*	*12*
	4,154	98	4,252	*3,695*	*3,695*

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	*Unrestricted funds 2024*	*Total funds 2024*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Bank interest	15	15	*9*	*9*

7. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025	*Unrestricted funds 2024*	*Total funds 2024*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Other income	48	48	*37*	*37*

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	*Unrestricted funds 2024*	*Restricted funds 2024*	*Total funds 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
Provision of services	5,423	145	5,568	*4,924*	*31*	*4,955*

9. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2025	Support costs 2025	Total funds 2025	*Activities undertaken directly Restated 2024*	*Support costs Restated 2024*	*Total funds Restated 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
Provision of services	3,418	2,149	5,567	*2,944*	*2,011*	*4,955*

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2025	*Total funds Restated 2024*
	£000	*£000*
Pension finance costs	43	*102*
Staff costs	11,617	*8,950*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(8,590)	*(6,982)*
Agency costs	348	*874*
Total 2025	3,418	*2,944*

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (continued)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2025	*Total funds Restated 2024*
	£000	*£000*
Staff costs	**1,200**	*1,027*
Depreciation	**566**	*529*
Other staff costs	**172**	*196*
Premises costs	**1,109**	*1,079*
IT costs	**407**	*314*
Legal & professional costs	**106**	*132*
Insurance costs	**254**	*211*
Travel costs	**131**	*178*
Other support costs	**333**	*356*
Office costs	**202**	*214*
Governance costs	**19**	*33*
Marketing costs	**91**	*20*
Catering costs	**220**	*197*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	**(2,661)**	*(2,475)*
Total 2024	**2,149**	*2,011*

10. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor for the audit of the Group's annual accounts	20	19
Fees payable to the Group's auditor in respect of:		
All taxation compliance services not included above	3	3
All assurance services not included above	2	1
All non-audit services not included above	6	4

11. STAFF COSTS

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*	Charity 2025	*Charity 2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Wages and salaries	**11,128**	*8,710*	**11,128**	*8,710*
Social security costs	**962**	*732*	**962**	*732*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**625**	*415*	**625**	*415*
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	**102**	*120*	**102**	*120*
	12,817	*9,977*	**12,817**	*9,977*

Redundancy payments of £1k (2024: £nil) and severance payments of £20k (2024: £nil) were made during the year.

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*	Charity 2025	*Charity 2024*
	No.	*No.*	**No.**	*No.*
Teaching staff	**116**	*94*	**116**	*94*
Care staff	**306**	*279*	**306**	*279*
Management and Administration	**45**	*36*	**45**	*36*
	467	*409*	**467**	*409*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*
	No.	*No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	**1**	*1*
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	**3**	
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	**1**	*1*
In the band £120,000 - £130,000		*1*
In the band £130,000 - £140,000	**1**	

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, the Director of Corporate Services and the Finance Director. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £522k (2024: £437k).

12. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2025, expenses totalling £513 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2024: £526 to 1 Trustee).

13. PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENTS

Residential income attributable to Autism East Midlands totalling £152k was previously included within Norsaca (Trading) Limited turnover for the year ended 31 March 2024. This income has now been reversed out of Norsaca (Trading) Limited and recognised within Autism East Midlands. The above adjustment has no impact on the consolidated position, only the individual entity position.

The recharge of expenditure from Autism East Midlands to Norsaca (Trading) Limited has been revised down by £152k for the year ended 31 March 2024. As a result, direct costs in Autism East Midlands have increased by £152k and cost of sales in Norsaca (Trading) Limited have decreased by £152k. The above adjustment has no impact on the consolidated position, only the individual entity position.

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group and Company

	Freehold property	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Office Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Cost or valuation						
At 1 April 2024	9,866	257	25	1,086	571	11,805
Additions	213		10	197		420
Disposals	(3)				1,969	1,966
At 31 March 2025	10,076	257	35	1,283	2,540	14,191
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2024	3,532	257	25	913		4,727
Charge for the year	465		2	99		566
At 31 March 2025	3,997	257	27	1,012		5,293
Net book value						
At 31 March 2025	6,079		8	271	2,540	8,898
At 31 March 2024	*6,335*			*172*	*571*	*7,078*

15. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

Company investments in subsidiary companies totalled £6 at 31 March 2025 (2024: £6).

Principal Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

Names	Company number	Basis of control	Holding	Included in consolidation
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	08056114	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	03381476	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

Names	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Profit / (Loss) for the year £000
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	6,702	(5,599)	1,103
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	6,737	(5,653)	1,084

16. DEBTORS

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2025	*2024*	**2025**	*2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**1,415**	*2,019*	**369**	*445*
Amounts owed by group undertakings			**3,921**	*4,603*
Other debtors	**107**	*49*	**52**	*21*
Prepayments and accrued income	**312**	*376*	**221**	*316*
	1,834	*2,444*	**4,563**	*5,385*

17. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2025	*2024*	**2025**	*2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Bank loans	**151**	*147*	**151**	*147*
Trade creditors	**443**	*231*	**443**	*231*
Other taxation and social security	**752**	*856*	**752**	*856*
Other creditors	**289**	*111*	**286**	*112*
Accruals and deferred income	**904**	*579*	**455**	*360*
	2,539	*1,924*	**2,087**	*1,706*

18. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2025	*2024*	**2025**	*2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Bank loans	**1,202**	*1,353*	**1,202**	*1,353*

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2025	*2024*	**2025**	*2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Between one and two years				
Bank loans	**155**	*151*	**155**	*151*
Between two and five years				
Bank loans	**493**	*479*	**493**	*479*
Over five years				
Bank loans	**554**	*723*	**554**	*723*

The aggregate amount of liabilities payable or repayable wholly or in part more than five years after the reporting date is:

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2025	*2024*	**2025**	*2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Repayable by instalments	**554**	*723*	**554**	*723*

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% respectively and repayments are repayable monthly.

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
DESIGNATED FUNDS						
Designated Funds - all funds	381		(29)			352
GENERAL FUNDS						
General Funds - all funds						
All funds	10,123	4,321	(5,364)	2,188		11,268
Reserves -						
Subsidiaries		13,439	(11,251)	(2,188)		
Pension reserve	(950)		(30)		980	
	9,173	17,760	(16,645)		980	11,268
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	**9,554**	**17,760**	**(16,674)**		**980**	**11,620**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (Continued)

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7					7
Jones Trust - Science Lab	17		(4)			13
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	38					38
BNA Charitable Organisation	38		(13)			25
The Lady Hind Trust	1					1
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	9		(4)			5
Old Heanorians	1		(1)			
Gilander Foundation-Children of Northampton	5	1	(4)			2
Wolfson Grant	30		(3)			27
B&Q Charitable Donation		5	(1)			4
Stangward Trust		1	(1)			
Toyota Charitable Donation		4	(1)			3
Derbyshire Autism Services - restricted funds		121	(113)			8
	146	**132**	**(145)**			**133**
Total of funds	**9,700**	**17,892**	**(16,819)**		**980**	**11,753**

Designated funds - set aside for employment and social enterprise.

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a program to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The National Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation - this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Jones Trust - Science Lab represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school.

Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Children in Need - Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton - a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

BNA Charitable Organisation - Funding received from the BNA Charitable Organisation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Old Heanorians - This funding received from Old Heanorians is to support the Heanor Family Support Hub.

The Lady Hind Trust - Funding received from The Lady Hind Trust contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust - Funding received from Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust contributes towards the redevelopment of the school courtyard and garden at Sutherland House School.

John Eastwood Foundation - Funding received from John Eastwood Foundation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Gilander Foundation - Children of Northampton - This represents a donation to support the children of Northamptonshire.

Wolfson Grant - To facilitate the refurbishment of a legacy property to become an education training house for our Autistic service users and school children.

Next - This represent a donation to provide equipment for the sensory room at the Hamilton Lodge Day Center

B&Q Charitable Donation - Charitable Donation for the Sherwood Day Centre to have a greenhouse for service users to use as part of their activities.

The Stangward Trust - Donation for the use of the family hubs of Northampton.

Toyota Charitable Donation - Charitable donation for sensory equipment at the Mundy Street Day Centre and Sherwood Day Centre.

Derbyshire Autism Services Restricted Funds - Funding received from various organisations/donors for various purposes: Derbyshire County Council Covid funding and Capacity Recruitment Grant, BBC Children in Need, National Lottery Community Fund, Nottinghamshire Community Foundation, Calums Voice, Amber Valley Borough Council S Ways to Wellbeing, Derby Specialist Wellbeing navigator, Derby Wellbeing, Neurodevelopmental Community Hubs, Short Breaks and 1:1 in Community Empowerment.

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	*As restated Income*	*As restated Expenditure*	*As restated Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Unrestricted Funds						
Designated Funds						
Designated Funds - all funds		381				381

	Balance at 1 April 2023	*As restated Income*	*As restated Expenditure*	*As restated Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Funds						
General Funds - all funds	*9,399*	*3,786*	*(4,830)*	*1,768*		*10,123*
Reserves - subsidiaries	*(542)*	*11,756*	*(9,458)*	*(1,756)*		
Pension reserve	*(2,183)*		*(94)*		*1,327*	*(950)*
	6,674	***15,542***	***(14,382)***	***12***	***1,327***	***9,173***
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	***6,674***	***15,923***	***(14,382)***	***12***	***1,327***	***9,554***

	Balance at 1 April 2023	*As restated Income*	*As restated Expenditure*	*As restated Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2024*
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	*7*					*7*
Jones Trust - Science Lab	*21*			*(4)*		*17*
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	*38*					*38*
Wilson Foundation	*4*		*(4)*			
BNA Charitable Organisation	*63*		*(17)*	*(8)*		*38*
The Lady HindTrust	*3*		*(2)*			*1*
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	*14*			*(5)*		*9*
John Eastwood Foundation	*1*		*(1)*			
Old Heanorians	*2*		*(1)*			*1*
Gilander Foundation - Children of Northampton		*5*				*5*
Wolfson Grant		*31*		*(1)*		*30*
Next			*(6)*	*6*		
TOTAL OF FUNDS	***153***	***36***	***(31)***	***(12)***		***146***
Total of funds	***6,827***	***15,959***	***(14,413)***		***1,327***	***9,700***

20. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Designated Funds	381		(29)			352
General Funds	9,173	17,760	(16,645)		980	11,268
Restricted funds	146	132	(145)			133
	9,700	**17,892**	**(16,819)**		**980**	**11,753**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	*As restated Income*	*As restated Expenditure*	*As restated Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2024*
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Designated funds		*381*				*381*
General Funds	*6,674*	*15,542*	*(14,382)*	*12*	*1,327*	*9,173*
Restricted funds	*153*	*36*	*(31)*	*(12)*		*146*
	6,827	***15,959***	***(14,413)***		***1,327***	***9,700***

21. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total funds 2025
	£000	**£000**	**£000**
Tangible fixed assets	8,825	73	8,898
Current assets	6,536	60	6,596
Creditors due within one year	(2,539)		(2,539)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,202)		(1,202)
Total	**11,620**	**133**	**11,753**

22. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Group	*Group*
	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Net income/expenditure for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**1,073**	*1,546*
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation charges	**566**	*529*
Loss/(Profit) on the sale of fixed assets		*1*
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	**576**	*825*
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	**645**	*313*
FRS102 pension adjustments	**30**	*94*
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**2,890**	*3,308*

23. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	Group	*Group*
	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Cash in hand	**4,762**	*4,405*
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	**4,762**	*4,405*

24. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows	At 31 March 2025
	£000	**£000**	**£000**
Cash at bank and in hand	4,405	357	4,762
Debt due within 1 year	(147)	(4)	(151)
Debt due after 1 year	(1,353)	151	(1,202)
	2,905	**504**	**3,409**

25. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*	Charity 2025	*Charity 2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements				
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	**46**		**46**	

26. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Group operates a defined benefit pension scheme.

Retirement benefits to employees of the Group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 March 2025 was £142k (2024: £160k), of which employer's contributions totalled £115k (2024: £128k) and employees' contributions totalled £27k (2024: £32k). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.3% for employers and between 5.5% and 12.5% for employees.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	At 31 March 2025	*At 31 March 2024*
	%	*%*
Discount rate	**5.8**	*4.9*
Pension increases	**2.9**	*2.95*
Future salary increases	**2.9**	*2.95*

	At 31 March 2025	*At 31 March 2024*
	Years	*Years*
Mortality rates (in years)		
for a male aged 65 now	**20.4**	*20.4*
at 65 for a male aged 45 now	**21.7**	*21.7*
for a female aged 65 now	**23.3**	*23.3*
at 65 for a female aged 45 now	**24.7**	*24.7*

Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 March 2025	*At 31 March 2024*
	£000	*£000*
Discount rate +0.1%	**299**	*370*
Discount rate -0.1%	**306**	*379*
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	**594**	*788*
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	**576**	*760*
Pension increase rate +0.1%	**305**	*374*
Pension decrease rate -0.1%	**298**	*365*

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	At 31 March 2025	*At 31 March 2024*
	£000	*£000*
Equities	**12,384**	*14,164*
Gilts	**1,859**	*533*
Corporate bonds	**1,440**	*1,104*
Property	**2,295**	*2,365*
Cash and other liquid assets	**1,219**	*1,339*
Inflation Plus	**1,549**	*1,131*
Infrastructure	**1,640**	*1,608*
Total fair value of assets	**22,386**	*22,244*

The actual return on scheme assets was a gain of £846k (2024: gain of £1,882k).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities are as follows:

	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Current service cost	**91**	*110*
Interest on obligation	**1,117**	*1,101*
Interest income	**(1,074)**	*(999)*
Administrative expenses	**11**	*10*
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities	**145**	*222*

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Opening defined benefit obligation	**23,194**	*23,320*
Current service cost	**91**	*110*
Interest cost	**1,117**	*1,101*
Contributions by scheme participants	**27**	*32*
Actuarial gains	**(3,339)**	*(565)*
Benefits paid	**(817)**	*(804)*
Closing defined benefit obligation	**20,273**	*23,194*

Movements in the fair value of the Group's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2025	*2024*
	£000	*£000*
Opening fair value of scheme assets	**22,244**	*21,137*
Interest income	**1,074**	*999*
Administrative expenses	**(11)**	*(10)*
Actuarial (losses)/gains	**(2,359)**	*762*
Contributions by employer	**115**	*128*
Contributions by scheme participants	**27**	*32*
Benefits paid	**(817)**	*(804)*
Closing fair value of scheme assets	**20,273**	*22,244*

The Charity has an unrecognised surplus of £2,113k (2024: £nil) in respect of its defined benefit pension Scheme as it does not expect to recover the Scheme surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the Scheme. Included within actuarial remeasurements on the Scheme's assets of £2,359k is an amount of £2,113k in respect of the restriction on the surplus in the Scheme.

27. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2025 the Group and the Charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*	Charity 2025	*Charity 2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Not later than 1 year	**101**	*94*	**101**	*94*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**152**	*7*	**152**	*7*
Later than 5 years	**150**		**150**	
	403	*101*	**403**	*101*

The following lease payments have been recognised as an expense in the Statement of financial activities:

	Group 2025	*Group 2024*	Charity 2025	*Charity 2024*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Operating lease rentals	**94**	*211*	**94**	*211*

28. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year, recharges from Autism East Midlands to Norsaca (Trading) Limited were £5,599k (2024 restated: £5,029k) and recharges from Autism East Midlands to Sutherland House (Trading) Limited were £5,653k (2024: £4,429k).

As at 31 August 2025, Nosaca (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £1,773k (2024: £2,488k) and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £2,150k (2024. £2,114k).



AEM Autism East Midlands

For more information...
W aem.org.uk
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Autism East Midlands

Our achievements over the past year have been the result of the work of our dedicated staff, combined with the significant support of all our partners. If you would like to get involved in our work, we would love to hear from you.

This information can be provided in a more accessible format by contacting **enquiries@aem.org.uk**

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Registered charity no. 517954
Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England no. 2053860

AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales - Charity number 517954

Accounts

Annual Review
2023 - 2024

AEM
Autism East Midlands



Welcome
to Autism East Midlands



George Smith
Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank all of our dedicated staff for their unwavering commitment and dedication in providing quality care to the people we support. We have all continued to work hard in the face of difficulties experienced due to changes in public policy, an increasingly turbulent time in politics and rising costs which are being seen across the sector.

In the last Annual Review, we shared the news that all frontline staff were to receive a second pay rise in December 2022. This provided help to our staff through a difficult cost-of-living crisis.

This year, we have reaped the benefits of putting our staff first. More service users were able to access respite support this year, and the numbers of students that attended Sutherland House School has also increased, allowing more young people to have their needs met much earlier in their school career.

We had many stories of staff who go above and beyond, and were also thrilled to see some new faces in the organisation this year, with recruitment continuing to recover post-pandemic and allowing us to expand and create new roles, such as our Social Enterprise Lead, which will play a vital role in future projects moving forward.

While we are mindful of the challenges ahead, we are optimistic for the future of Autism East Midlands. However, we know that success can only be achieved by the continued support of our staff, communities, and those who fundraise on our behalf or have left us a gift in their will.

We thank you for taking the time to read this annual review, and hope that the support you have given us this year will continue in the future.



Jane Howson
Chief Executive Officer

We've continued to go the extra mile in 2023/2024, investing more in the core services that we provide and ensuring that the people we support see and experience those benefits.

Our Whitegates respite service marked its first anniversary, and you'll see stories throughout this review of how the people we support, as well as families, parents and carers who need short-term care and provision for their loved ones have benefitted from this service.

As always, it is important to us that this is guided by the outcomes chosen by each person that we support.

This year, we were pleased to promote Ann Stewart, who has made massive contributions to Sutherland House School and has done a fantastic job as Headteacher for many years. We were pleased to appoint Ann into a new role within Senior Leadership as Director of Education.

In this role, Ann will continue to work closely with the school and its new Headteacher Robbie Jones, to ensure that we continue to provide a holistic, person-centred education for all our students and are also able to expand our existing offer for child services.

In the climate of uncertainty that follows an election year, we're so grateful to be in a position as a charity to expand our services and we have a lot of exciting plans in the coming year, including a new school, developing Worksop's former fire station into a day centre and more projects that will be announced on our website and social media nearer the time.

All of the above can only be achieved with the support of our staff, donors, funders, supporters, trustees, families, carers, service users, communities and others championing our cause.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to sharing more in the months ahead.

About AEM

We've been supporting autistic people and their families since 1968.

Our charity was founded by a small group of parents in Nottingham, who were seeking a better future for their children. Two years after launching the charity, Sutherland House School was opened to its first students.

It soon became clear that there was a need for services for adults too and we opened our very first accommodation-based service in Worksop for adults. Today?

Well, we now provide support to families across the region from Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire through to Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire.

Our services include:

- Residential support
- Support living services
- Flexible day services
- Respite
- Employment support
- Family support hubs
- Parent workshops
- And specialist education at Sutherland House School.

While we've grown, our support is still very much led by our service users. We strongly believe that each person we support should feel heard, valued, in control, independent, respected, and included.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

What did we do?

Our year in pictures



APRIL 2023

Jane's piano performance

Musical maestro, Jane from our Poplars residential service delighted an audience with an evening of piano music.



MAY 2023

Coronation celebrations

Many of our services celebrated the momentous coronation of King Charles III. Our Family Support Hubs hosted coronation-themed activities for youngsters, while Hamilton day service had their own arts and crafts session.



JUNE 2023

Music sessions launched at Hill Top

Karen Matthews, who has been an autism practitioner at Hill Top for the past 12 years, launched new music sessions which were a hit with our residents in Bolsover.



OCTOBER 2023

Carlton Road's new garden and patio area

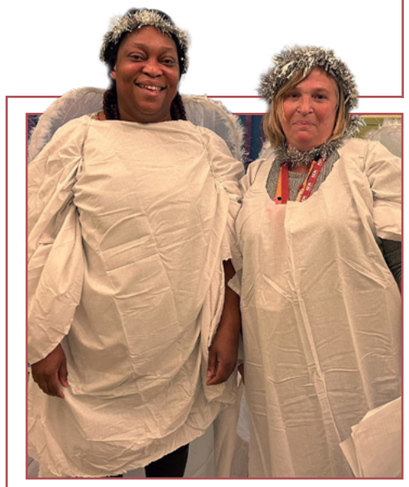
Service users at Worksop's Carlton Road service enjoyed their newly transformed garden and patio area.



NOVEMBER 2023

Odd Socks Day

Sutherland House School joined thousands of people across the country to wear mismatched socks for the day to celebrate individuality and differences.



DECEMBER 2023

Beechwood wows audience with festive show

Residents at our Beechwood service staged a terrific Christmas show for family and friends. This was a group effort with everyone taking part in some form, including service manager, Luke Drury, playing the part as narrator!

JULY 2023

Garden project blossoms at Hamilton

Work began to create an improved garden area at our Hamilton service so that service users could spend more time there. The overgrown allotment was tidied up, the trees and bushes were cut back and the paths were cleared away.



AUGUST 2023

Exam results day

It was another joyful exam results day at Sutherland House School, with 27 successful exam results across a range of subjects and levels including Entry Level, Level 1 and GCSE.



SEPTEMBER 2023

Employment service establishes Employment Champions

A newly extended employment programme is set to offer more assistance to autistic job seekers, providing careers-related information and guidance to the people we support at our Hamilton and Mundy Street day services.



JANUARY 2024

Students welcome Pronto Rugby team into school

Pronto Rugby, a national rugby team that formed in 2023 to raise funds for Autism East Midlands and other charities, paid a visit to Sutherland House School.



FEBRUARY 2024

New training centre opens in Nottingham

Marchant House, our training centre for our school's older students, officially opens with thanks to the late Eric Kenneth Marchant estate and the Wolfson Foundation, which has allowed us to use the 3-bedroom house in Chilwell.



MARCH 2024

Sherwood Centre visit to Nottingham trams

Service users at our Sherwood Centre are huge fans of travelling on the Nottingham trams. When NET Tram found out about this, they invited us along for an exclusive visit around the site. Thank you NET Nottingham Trams for showing us around!



Adult Services

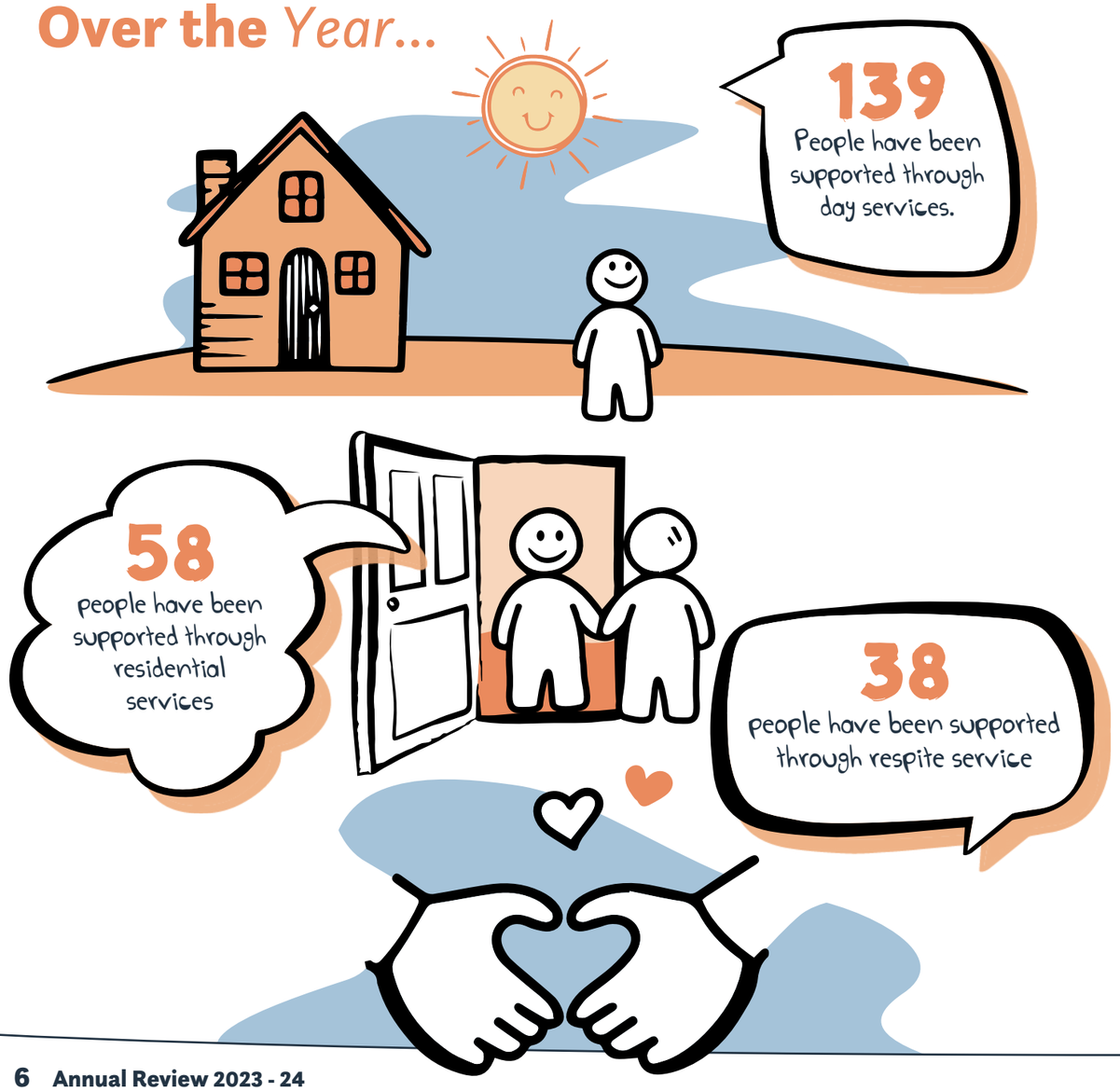
Providing a positive experience

We're proud of our many adult services across the East Midlands and our hard-working staff that keep us going. Whether it is our residential services, day services or respite service, we have always aimed to provide a person-centred, professional service with the people we support at the heart of all that we do.

This year, our Whitegates respite service celebrated its first anniversary. Over the year, it has begun to support 38 new service users, with even more awaiting commission from their local authority after completing home assessments. We have supported people arriving under emergency respite and families looking to go on their first holiday abroad.

All this makes a huge difference for families with caring responsibilities.

Over the *Year...*



Whitegates: *One year later...*

As Whitegates marks its first anniversary, we asked one family how they've benefited from the Worksop service. Here they share their experience.

Having a child with special needs is hard enough when they are in full time education. When that provision ends, then your whole world is turned upside down!

Suddenly they have nothing to do and nowhere to go – all the structure and routine that they were dependent on (and as parents we relied upon) disappeared overnight.

**A regressed enormously as he wasn't in a situation where he was having demands placed on him on a daily basis. We were always aware that he would do things at school that he definitely would not do at home for us. There was nobody able to push him out of his comfort zone in that way. This is why respite services like Whitegates are so vitally important to our young people.*

*It is so important that *A has the opportunity to build up relationships with others, who are able to offer him the vital care and support that he needs in order to thrive moving forward.*

*Something as simple as going out for a Sunday dinner to celebrate a birthday or Father's Day, for example wouldn't be possible, as *A would not be able to cope in that setting. For years things like this were simply 'avoided' as being too difficult/impossible, but now I feel that we are able to plan for things like this knowing that *A is happy doing something else – something that means far more to him than 'coping' whilst we do something that is important to us.*

*The ability to finally plan and book holidays is also a huge thing for us. Finding holidays that suited *A was always tricky, and again it was always easier for us not to go – particularly if it involved a foreign flight.*

*Since *A has been staying at Whitegates our lives have changed enormously, so much for the better you wouldn't believe! We have come a long way as a family in a relatively short time.*

Thank you to all those at Whitegates from the bottom of my heart.

*We have removed the names from this story to protect the privacy of the family involved.



Jane's *Story*

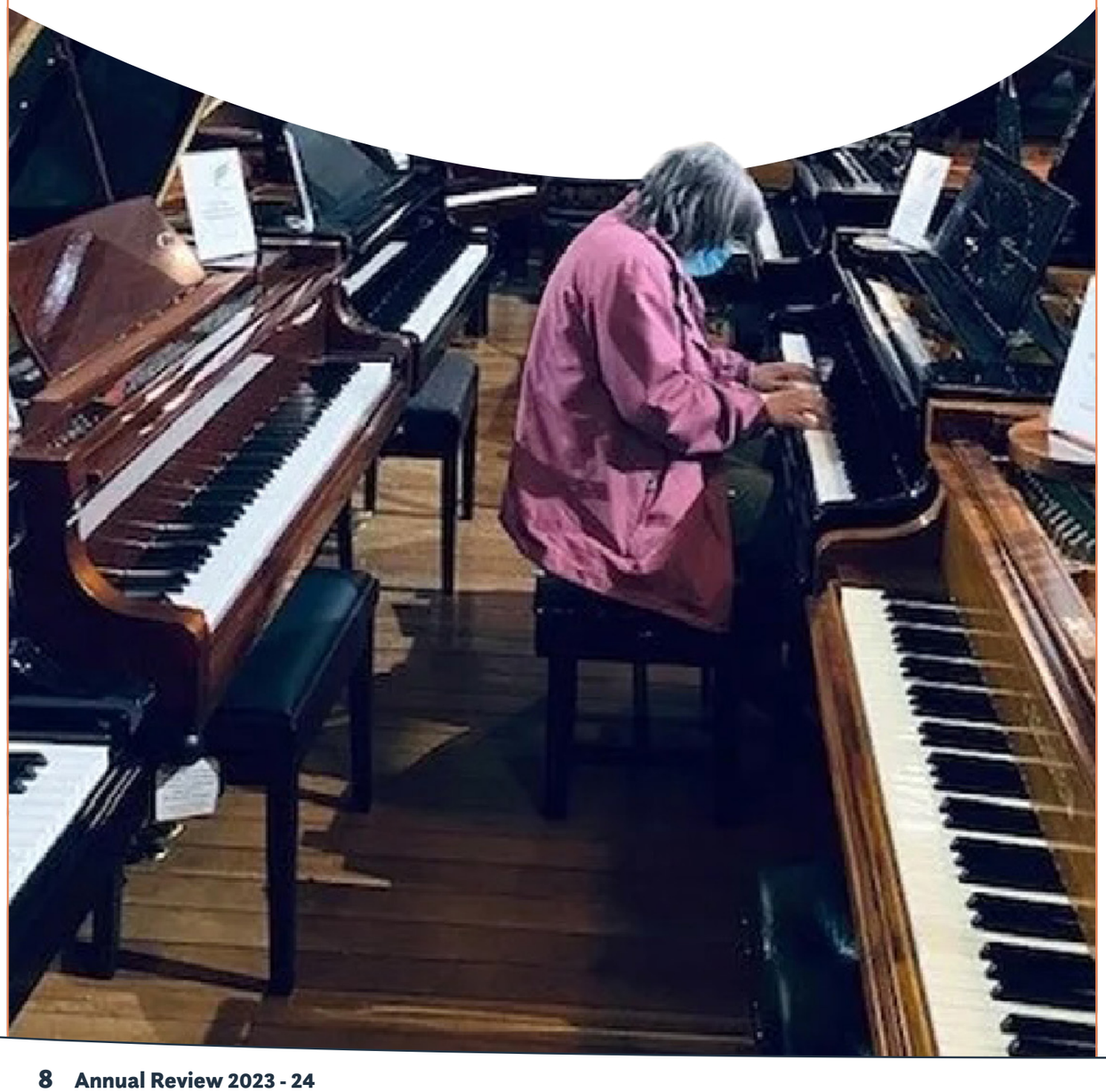
Music marvel Jane who lives at our Poplars residential service showcased her extraordinary skills during a very special concert in Whitwell.

Jane, 63, has enjoyed music from a very young age. She first began by playing the recorder, and after watching the Sound of Music film amazed everyone by quickly learning to play all the music from the film score.

It was her recorder teacher who suggested that Jane learn to play the piano.

As both Jane's father and grandfather played the piano, her parents decided to find a local piano teacher for her. Her father encouraged her love of music further and she went on to train at the prestigious Royal School of Music in London.

Jane has her own electronic piano at the Poplars, which she practices daily, and she was delighted to perform in her own show, An Evening of Piano Music with Jane, *which took place at the Derbyshire Community Centre on Saturday 22nd April.*



Mia's *Story*

Mia's mum wanted to go away with friends for a few nights. Mia is non-verbal and requires special support, and she needed to be sure that Mia could be settled before making plans.

Mia is an only child and has a special relationship with her mum and has difficulty feeling confident around others.

Whitegates Respite Service is not local to Mia's home, but as her mum tells it:

"When friends ask me why I travel so far to drop Mia off at Whitegates, I simply say 'wouldn't you if your only child's happy place is there?'"

Whitegates Respite Service offers autism-focused specialist support to adults like Mia, when carers require a break from their caring role for days or weeks at a time. The service is only a short distance away from Worksop town centre.

With six self-contained apartments provided as part of the service, users are able to build their independence and take part in activities both in-service and outside in the community, with support staff on-hand to provide care and needed support.

Mia's mum describes how the staff at Whitegates are like an extended family for Mia, and how she is "literally pushed out the door" when they arrive at the service.

"It's a gesture that every parent of a non-verbal child prays for and honestly if anything happened to me, Whitegates would be the only place my daughter would settle. Thank you Autism East Midlands for giving her a voice."



Callum's *Story*

Callum is very interested in trains.

So when he told the staff at Mundy Street Day Services that he wanted to go on train visits and see all the different train stations, his support workers did everything they could to help make Callum's desired outcomes a reality.

Staff began driving him to the local train station on days when he wanted to go, discussing with him every step of the way what they would do.

"He picked up things really quickly," said Lisa Bradbury, Manager of Mundy Street Services, "and he takes everything in."

For some autistic people, planning a journey can be a struggle. With public transport there are many stressors to consider, such as:

- ***Noise levels***
- ***Number of people around***
- ***What times the trains arrive***
- ***What to do in case of delays***
- ***Where to go***
- ***Walking or commuting to/from the station***
- ***Peak and off-peak times, especially when it's busy***

It is no wonder that service users such as Callum can take some time to become comfortable using public transport or opt not to use it entirely. But Callum wanted to go on train visits, so he and his staff worked out a plan.

Callum's Big Day

Lisa shared with us Callum's incredible progress, as he took several big steps towards his desired outcomes.

Callum wanted to do some train-spotting at Nottingham station.

He planned his journey before leaving Mundy Street, checking the timetables and cost of travel to make sure he could afford the trip.

Realising that he could not afford the train there and back, he took a bus to Nottingham and spent the day train-spotting at Nottingham with his staff, taking a packed lunch.

Then he purchased his own train ticket from Nottingham to Heanor.

These were huge steps for Callum and showed what a marked improvement he had made since first arriving at our day service in Mundy Street.

"He was so excited when he came into the office," said Lisa, "he was telling us all about the different trains he saw!"



Scott's *Story*

"He really struggles with trying new things"

Service users at the Dukeries Autism Centre in Worksop visited Danum Museum, Library and Gallery in Doncaster.

Home to impressive collections of books and art, there was a lot to see on the visit, and our service users loved exploring.

Support Worker Paige gave a special mention to one Dukeries service user, Scott, who previously had a bit of trouble with new experiences.

Talking about the trip, she said:
"Special shout-out to Scott as he really struggles with trying new things and he did fabulous!"



Joseph's *Story*



"This was a big step and he loved it."

Mundy Street service users visited the Luminarium at Highfields in Nottingham.

The Luminarium offers a controlled sensory experience which consists of inflatable domes displaying beautiful colours and patterns, captivating the senses with lights.

For one of our service users, Joseph, this was a huge step.

Lisa, our Mundy Street manager, said:

"Joseph doesn't go out much, so this was a big step and he loved it. He went out in the mini-bus and had a great day at the Luminarium."

Not only did Joseph enjoy his time out at the luminarium, but it seemed that he would be eager to do more trips in the future.

"When he arrived back at Mundy Street he was so happy and kept signing to go back out in the mini bus!"

Sutherland House School

Education for young autistic people

At Sutherland House School, we're committed to making sure that learning doesn't always take place in the classroom, and that there is support in place for students as they go on to adulthood.

As well as the opening of Marchant House, we also facilitated many work experience opportunities for our older students to get a taste of what adult life has to offer.

Key Stage 5 students did work experience at Stonebridge City Farm, Busy Bees Day Nursery, Sneinton Community Centre, and the Mind Charity Shop. Students also met with our own employment coaches about the help that AEM can offer to young people to find and access jobs after the age of 18, ensuring that students can make informed decisions about their future.

Over the Year...



Highlights *across the year...*

Workplace visit to Mantic Games

With the rise of young people developing interests in games-related careers, we arranged for students from Years 11 to 14 to visit Mantic Games, speaking to employees and learning how they design, produce, manufacture, market, and sell a wide variety of board games.



Visit to Mantic Games

Programming workshop at Vision West College

Key Stage 3 students took part in a programming workshop at the Computing department in Vision West College in May. They learnt how to program Lego robots using Scratch and took part in a challenge to program their robots to complete an obstacle course.



A Vision West College

Exam results day

It was a joyful exam results day at Sutherland House School, with 27 successful exam results across a range of subjects and levels including Entry Level, Level 1 and GCSE.

Despite the much-publicised tightening of grade boundaries this year, the vast majority of Sutherland House students' grades were awarded grades at expected levels or higher.



Exam Results Day

Case *Study*

Students attend our first Preparing for Adulthood Fair

We hosted our first Preparing for Adulthood Fair, aimed at year 9 pupils and upwards, where AEM's adult services and external providers shared options for the future.

As part of our careers guidance program, the event aimed to ensure that students, as well as their parents and carers, were informed about their options upon leaving school.

These options included:

- ***Further education***
- ***Employment***
- ***Residential care***
- ***Day services***

As well as external providers, members of Autism East Midlands' Adult Services and Employment teams attended to share information on day services, care and employment.

Service users from Autism East Midlands Dukeries service also baked biscuits, which were very popular with students!

Ten parents and carers attended the fair as well as students from three classes.

We know that there are many decisions to be made as young people approach adulthood, and we want our students to be better informed on what the future may hold for them, leading to better outcomes for young people.



Case *Study*

New training centre for autistic youngsters opens in Nottingham

A training centre run by Sutherland House School officially opened in February to help students develop independence skills within a house setting.

The spacious 3-bedroom house in Chilwell gives the school's older students the chance to learn a variety of household skills from cooking and cleaning to gardening.

"It has been designed to help our students move into adulthood and prepare them for a world after school," said Ann Stewart, Director of Education at Autism East Midlands.

Each term four students, aged between 17 and 19, will learn key skills that will help them become more independent, whilst also developing their confidence in their daily lives.

"We're using a structured approach that will enable our students to work towards their independence at their own pace."

"It means that when the time comes, they will be ready to move on and go on to live in supported living or go onto further education or whatever they choose to do next. We would like to maximise their potential and ensure they are prepared for their next stage in life."

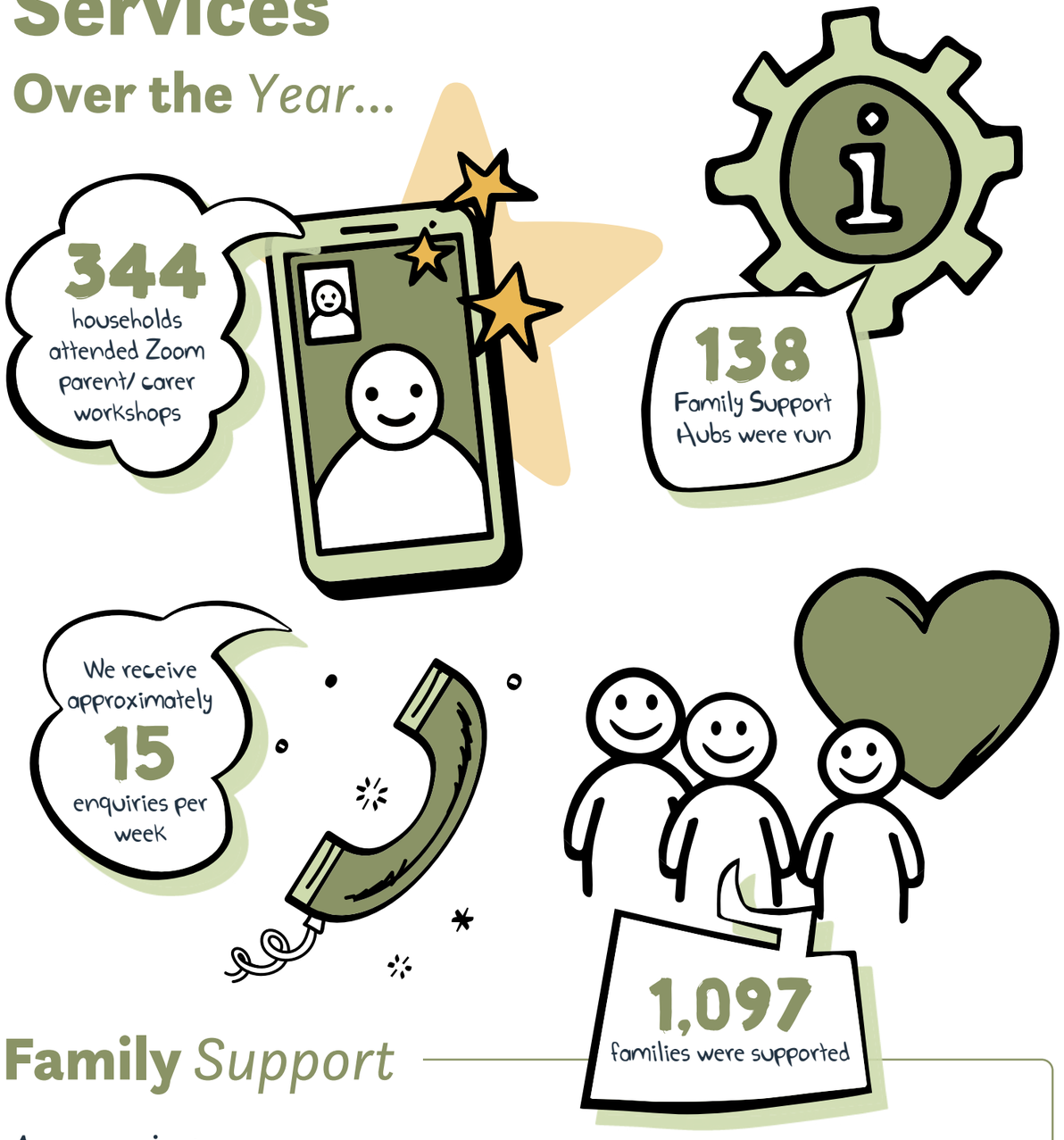
The creation of the training centre has been made possible thanks to a grant of £30,700 awarded from the Wolfson Foundation.

The building itself was donated to Autism East Midlands and Sutherland House School by the late Eric Kenneth Marchant. It underwent a major transformation in order to create this training facility and has been named in his memory.



Children & Families Services

Over the *Year...*



Family *Support*

An amazing year

With waiting lists for diagnosis getting longer and longer, so many children and families are left in a state of limbo as they attempt to navigate the differences of living with children on the autism spectrum.

Our family support hubs, which do not require diagnosis for a child to attend, have been invaluable for families.

Family *Support Hubs*

Our Family Support Hubs are monthly meet ups for families and their children, aged under 12 in most cases, with or without a formal diagnosis of autism. Hubs are present across Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and a small number in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Our Mansfield Woodhouse hub is also our first teenage hub, and again, no diagnosis is required.

We also recently organised for families from many of the hubs to visit Circus Starr, the special needs circus, and the feedback from this was fantastic.


Northampton Hub

> ***"X said she would give it a 9/10 because she didn't have to talk to anyone if she didn't want to and was allowed to play outside if it got too loud!"***

> ***"Just a note to say thanks to you for making us feel so welcome yesterday. Z really enjoyed himself and it was great to have a space for him to explore new toys and activities and spend some time with A who he hadn't met before.***


Loughborough Hub

Zoom *Workshops*

We run 6 workshops on a rolling basis, one per month. The topics are as follows.

- *INTRODUCTION TO AUTISM*
- *AUTISM AND GIRLS*
- *AUTISM AND SENSORY*
- *PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR*
- *AUTISM AND SCHOOLS*
- *AUTISM AND DLA*

The workshops are run over zoom to enable anyone from any part of our catchment to attend, and they are run in the evening. Depending on the topic, we get between 25 and 60 attendees to each Zoom session.

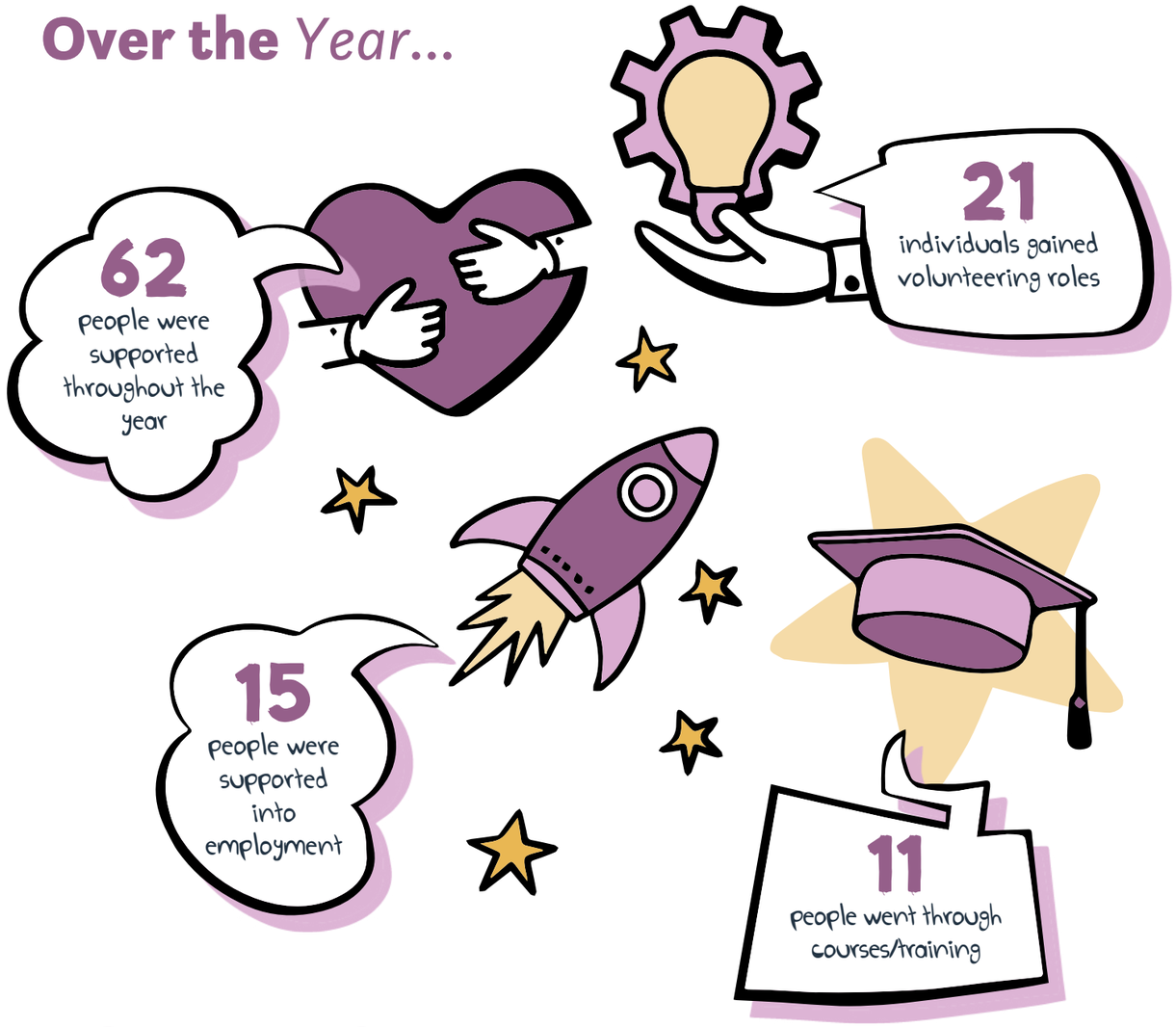
> ***"Just wanted to say thanks for the talk the other night. It was really informative. Lots of relevant information at a time that we need it."***

> ***"I'm currently listening to your presentation on Autism in girls - my goodness everything you say I can fully relate to, I'm so glad I found you!!"***

> ***"Many thanks for this and all the support AEM provides."***

Employment Services

Over the *Year...*



Success *Story*

Alasdair Sydes, Computer Games tester

"I worked with AEM's Employment team from September 2022. In that time I was assisted in getting a work experience opportunity in at Bassetlaw Hospital. I was able to use this opportunity work out what I wanted in my career.

I wanted to work in the computer game industry and was helped to find roles in this area. I was assisted to tailor my CV to show my strengths and knowledge as well as interview techniques which led to me getting a position as a game's tester.

I feel like this is an area I will continue to progress in. I have been supported when looking into benefits that I qualify for to help support me. I would like to thank the employment coaches for all of their help."

The Employment Coaches

breaking down barriers

When Kayleigh Owen first met with AEM's Employment Coach, she knew exactly what she hoped to achieve. She enjoyed cooking and baking and wanted to work in the food sector. However, getting an interview to secure her dream job was proving a major hurdle.

Completing job applications, attending interviews, and knowing just what to say to potential bosses were just some of the difficulties she faced. Like many autistic and neurodivergent jobseekers, Kayleigh is not on her own. Sadly, employment coaches at Autism East Midlands, Samantha Roberts and Oliver Mew hear stories like hers every day.

"Autistic people often face barriers not only getting into work but also staying in work and progressing," explained Samantha. "There are many who want to work and, with the right support, will thrive. However formal application processes and interviews are not always easy to navigate."

The Employment Team currently has a full quota of clients who have an autism diagnosis and need additional support to move into the workplace either in a paid or voluntary role. They are looking at jobs ranging from admin and waitressing through to journalism and accountancy.

"It's great to see people at the beginning of their journey and support them to succeed," said Samantha. The coaches provide the support that's needed whether that's help with putting together CVs or cover letters or finding work experience opportunities and exploring with them their passions so that they can find the right role for them.

As Employment Coach, Samantha has been supporting 36-year-old Kayleigh into work over the past 12 months.

"Kayleigh had always wanted to work in the food sector, but she wasn't having any luck getting her first break," she said. "She had been unemployed for some time and with nothing current on her CV, it was proving a major barrier for her to find work. She was finding it difficult for her to get her foot in the door."

The first step was to help Kayleigh access some formal training so that she could add it to her CV. AEM was able to help her access online training and Kayleigh has now achieved her Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification.

Samantha was also able to provide support when Kayleigh wanted to apply to work with family-run business, Frank Roberts Bakery. *"I contacted them on her behalf to see if there was a possibility they would be willing to give her a temporary placement. Immediately they came back to me and invited me onto their site to discuss how they could help."*

Samantha also accompanied Kayleigh to meet with the recruitment team, so that she could be there for support should Kayleigh need it. Kayleigh has now moved into a temporary paid role at the Heanor site, which enables her to gain valuable work experience and helping her on her journey to become a bakery operative.

"Kayleigh is cheerful and bright and has a brilliant work ethic," added Samantha. *"She has a passion for cooking and her ambition has always been to work in a bakery and I'm thrilled that we have been able to support her so that she can begin to follow that dream."*



Kayleigh Owen with Maria Severn

Our Team

Our staff are specialists in autism and share our desire to create a world which recognises, understands and values autistic people. In these pages, you will read a few staff stories, but there are countless examples across our services every day.

Sarah's *Story*



Sarah with Adam

"25 years later, I still love my job and the service users are what keep me going."

Senior Autism Practitioner, Sarah Cordall celebrated a work anniversary milestone after working with Autism East Midlands for 25 years.

Sarah first joined the charity in 1998, initially working at the Whitegates support service in Worksop before moving to provide support in other Autism East Midlands services in the area. She has now come full circle, returning to Whitegates, which provides respite support to autistic adults whilst offering their families and carers the chance to take a break as carers.

"I found that it was a role that I could do around my family commitments when my kids were small," explained Sarah of how she joined the charity.

Katie Threlfall, Manager at Whitegates, praised Sarah for providing exceptional support to our service users.

"Sarah is absolutely fantastic and brilliant at her job. She is always smiling and upbeat and brilliant to work with. She is very people-focused and is always bringing new ideas for ways to support our service users and offers the very best support for the people who stay at Whitegates."

Reflecting on her many years in service, Sarah said:

"All these years later I still love my job and the service users are what keep me going. I love spending time with the people we support and each day is very different. And I know that what we do is making a real difference to people's lives."

Ben's *Story*

"My colleagues have helped me to accept my diagnosis and learn about what makes me who I am."

Ben, our Deputy Director of Adult Services, shares his experience since his diagnosis and how feeling accepted at work can make a huge difference.

Back in January 2021 I received my autism diagnosis. There, I've said it. It's taken me this long to get to the stage where I can write these words.

Even now I'm wary about saying it out loud because there's still a long way to go towards ending the stigma around autism.

When I received my diagnosis, sadly my experience was negative. People I was close to laughed in my face and overnight I was treated differently.

I was made to feel as though something was wrong with me. I was also exhausted from 'masking' who I actually was on a daily basis. While 'masking' and hiding away my autistic traits I wasn't being me and I wasn't being true to myself.



And now? Fast forward two years and I am in a work environment where I am fully accepted and supported to be the best I can be at work. My colleagues have helped me to accept my diagnosis and learn about what makes me who I am. I'm now able to be myself and have reduced the 'masking' of my autistic traits. It's only part of who I am.

When I was promoted to Deputy Director of Adult Services at AEM, it's wasn't something I ever thought about doing before the opportunity came up.

I had worked in the adult social care sector for several years before joining AEM in 2021. Years of work experience put me in good stead for the role and my autism diagnosis brings an extra layer to those skills. I have both an understanding of our support services, as well as personal experience of autism.

My own autism diagnosis isn't something I've shared with many people but it is getting easier to talk about. Things are beginning to change as we see more about autism in the media.

There's now a better understanding of how it affects people. Autism comes in different forms and affects autistic people differently. Every individual has their own challenges. Some may struggle in social situations, others may be oversensitive to noises or lights, while some face issues around anxiety. There are numerous ways it can affect people.

Acceptance is the next step.

Steph's *Story*

"I wanted to do something more rewarding."

Before joining Autism East Midlands, Steph led a very different life as a self-employed beautician, but after switching into care, she admits she's "never looked back.

Steph Moss is the manager of our Dukeries service in Worksop. Together with a team of support workers, they ensure the people we support are able to enjoy a wide range of activities and receive care and guidance to help them achieve their outcomes.

Steph tells us about her journey from beautician to day centre manager.

It's 9.15 in the morning but already a long queue is forming outside Steph's office. The corridor is a hive of activity as everyone gets set for the day ahead.

People gather, grabbing coats and bags, as they prepare for a day out and much talk and laughter echoes around. And then there's the sounds of the enthusiastic strumming of guitar strings from Kevin, who is sat by her office door.



"No two days are ever the same here," laughs Steph as she views the scene. "And I wouldn't want it any other way."

Before joining Autism East Midlands, Steph led a very different life as a self-employed beautician; her days filled with appointments for facials, manicures and eyelash and brow treatments.

"I wanted to do something more rewarding though and, honestly, I needed a stable, regular income," explained Steph.

"A friend, who worked in the care sector, suggested that I try support work. She thought I had all the right attributes. I applied to work with AEM and ten years later, here I am! I'm still here and I've not looked back."

"You'd think that my previous job was very different but actually my friend was right. They have similar skill sets. Being able to listen and having communication and interpersonal skills is key."

So Steph took the plunge and switched careers. She joined Autism East Midlands and, after completing a comprehensive training programme, began her first role as a casual relief worker.

She went on to become a full-time member of staff at our day centre at Nottingham, commuting each day from her Worksop home. When she was offered the role of Assistant Manager at the Dukeries, she jumped at the chance and it wasn't long before she was promoted to Manager.

Steph continued: *"If you've a passion to support others, I would recommend a change in career and a move into care work. The days are varied and it's brilliant to see the positive impact that you can make on people's lives. Everything we do can make a difference."*

The centre enables people to pursue their interests and hobbies, from swimming and keeping fit to learning how to cook for themselves or taking on volunteer roles.

"Watching someone achieve something that they never, ever thought possible is beyond emotional. It's a brilliant feeling to see people progress and to live their best lives. It means so much. It never gets old. I love my job."



Thank *You!*

Pronto Rugby

The Pronto Rugby team, newly formed in 2023, have specifically set up to fundraise for both Autism East Midlands and a mental health charity since launching.

They have been continually raising funds for us through rugby matches, taking part in games and holding raffles.

Some of the team dropped into Sutherland House School to give us their donation of £1,000 to Autism East Midlands. Students loved hearing how the money was raised before they showed team members around the school.



Levi shows Pronto Rugby around the school

Great Eastern Run

Trio of friends Ben Lee, George Finney and John Gray took part in the Great Eastern Run to raise money for Autism East Midlands.

The event, which attracted 5,000 runners, took participants on a 13 mile route through the city centre and the grounds of Peterborough Cathedral.

John finished the Great Eastern Run in 1 hour 56 minutes, Ben finished in 2 hours 5 minutes, and George crossed the finishing line 15 minutes later.

A mammoth £1,800 was raised between them on the day. But their efforts didn't end there. Ben, John and another friend of theirs, JJ Price, ran the London Marathon to raise even more funds for Autism East Midlands.



The Great Eastern Run

Shakespeare Martineau and Marrons

Two Nottingham businesses, law firm Shakespeare Martineau and planning, design and development consultancy Marrons, joined forces to support Autism East Midlands.

Andy Gore from Marron's climbed Mt Snowdon with his 10-year-old daughter, Florence, to raise funds. The duo trekked the 14.5km Llanberis Path to reach the mountain's summit in tough weather conditions - and managed to walk there and back within an impressive 6 hours.

Andy said: "Florence has autism and we regularly use and access Autism East Midlands' services, particularly its monthly family hubs. We wanted to give something back to the charity and climbed Snowdon together to do so!"



Andy and Florence

Special thanks to:

Andrew Gore

Ben Lee

College Pines Golf Club

Eileen Burley

Elaine Palfrey

Ethan Maud

Florence Gore

George Finney

Guilder Foundation

Jean Wilson

Jill Bacon

JJ Price

John Gray

Jose Raygaza

Knights Solicitors

Lizanne Davies

Martin Wood and partner

Mr & Mrs Pearson

Mr & Mrs Clarke

Plough Pub

Pronto Rugby

Radcliffe-on-Trent Guides and Brownies

Roger Harcourt

Ron Palfrey

Stuart Macgregor at GXO Logistics

White Meadow Furniture Co.



Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees
K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan (resigned 6 September 2024)
P Parr
R D Levy
M J McGuigan *(resigned 7 March 2024)*
S D Barnes *(resigned 3 May 2024)*
C L Sharpe *(appointed 7 March 2024, resigned 3 May 2024)*

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office:
Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate,
Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop,
Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditor:
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor Cubo Birmingham 4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX

Bankers:
Lloyds Bank Plc
4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the group and company for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charity's strategic objectives.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our vision
A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our mission
To advocate, provide and develop high quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Strategic priorities
Our priorities for the next five years are as follows:

Quality
To ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services by focussing on the following areas:

- Continuing the improvement of the environments within which we work and provide services to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our beneficiaries.
- All of our environments will be designed to minimise restrictions to individuals and maximise their independence.
- By becoming the employer of choice in our field, enabling us to recruit and train staff aligned with our values and skilled in working with autistic people.
- Ensuring the practice in all our services offers purposeful activity enabling individuals we support to maximise their independence in all areas of their lives.
- We will improve our measurement of and focus on person centred services and the delivery of meaningful outcomes for everyone accessing our support.
- We will understand our performance by utilising our quality assurance matrix informed by our review and audit processes.

Increasing the voice of autistic people
We will ensure that the 'voice' of autistic people (in whatever form that takes) is at the heart of everything we do by enabling people to fully participate in all planning and reviews that pertain to them and/or the service that they access.

By supporting autistic people to play a central role in our organisation, as employees, service users, in our performance management and governance.

We will systematically engage with service users in whatever way is most effective for them. We will use this ongoing dialogue to ensure that the decisions we make, both large and small, are shaped by autistic people.

Evidence based support
We will continue to engage with the wider 'autism community' to ensure that we are engaged with the research agenda.

We will ensure that our delivery and interventions are evidence based – wherever evidence exists.

We will ensure that we keep ourselves informed of innovative practice and adjust our delivery in line with innovation.

We will further develop our digital training and resources and make them available to all staff..

Maximum impact

We will invest in our development of services that support autistic people to access work. We will do so in order to access greater resources, demonstrate models of effective practice and influence the national agenda around employment. We will do so as an organisation and also in partnership with others.

To increase participation of autistic people in paid employment

We will develop employment and employability services that enable autistic people that are new to the organisation to access support and develop opportunities for existing students and service users, including the development of social enterprises, micro social enterprises and self employment opportunities.

We will continue to grow the number of people accessing our support both in number and in geographic spread. This will include opening new or satellite services.

We will develop services that target autistic people with whom our contact is currently minimal and who are often isolated and find it difficult to find services that meet their needs. In particular, we will develop services that offer social opportunities and advice and guidance for adults without a learning disability.

Financial Review

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities and key performance indicators
In the prior financial year the charity took the unusual decision to pay a second pay rise and make a financial loss. The purposes of this decision were twofold, firstly to ensure staff could survive the cost of living crisis and secondly to improve recruitment and reduce agency use. Recruitment had been very challenging post pandemic and agency use had risen to an unprecedented level.

We saw that strategy work in this financial year and the rate of agency use reduce significantly, particularly in our adults services. We also saw the number of children in our school rise to 83 which meant that the with the spread of fixed overheads school became more financially robust.

Adults Services

More people were able to access our respite service in Worksop in this financial year.

Children's Services

Sutherland House School saw a significant increase in the number of children in its care during this year, rising to 83. We also saw the age profile of the children change, with many of the new students coming in at the primary stage. This is excellent news as it means that young people can have their autism needs met much earlier in their school careers, allowing them to thrive.

Students achieved 27 formal qualifications and a further 40 accreditations during the summer of 23.

Our Family Support Hubs moved towards becoming self funding during this year as grant funding had finished. We continued to support children and families across the East Midlands, with 12 Hub locations this year.

b. Factors relevant to achieve objectives
AEM continued to be a specialist autism service provider. This specialism is what makes our services so successful in meeting the needs of autistic people.

c. Investment policy and performance
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

a. Going concern
After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b. Reserves policy
Autism East Midlands takes a risk based approach to the setting of reserves. The objective of this policy is to provide a level of working capital that protects the continuity of the charitable objectives, provide a level of funding for unexpected opportunities and to provide cover for unforeseen risks.

The biggest mitigation against catastrophic loss calling on reserves is the fact that AEM has a very diverse service offer and is commissioned by multiple local authorities.

The levels of restricted and unrestricted funds is monitored and shared with Trustees on a monthly basis.

c. Surplus
A surplus of £2,873k (2023: surplus £9,999k) has been achieved in year. This includes a reduction to restricted funds of £ 7,000 (2023: £ 77,646 reduction).

The group had total funds of £9,700k as at 31 March 2024 (2023: £6,827k), consisting of £146k restricted funds (2023: £153k), £10,504k unrestricted funds (2023: £8,857k) and a pension deficit of £950k (2023: £2,183k deficit). Unrestricted funds in 2024 include a designation of £381k from the legacy of Eileen Burley which has been set aside for employment and social enterprise.

d. Material investments policy
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

e. Principal risks and uncertainties
The principal risk across our services is the inflationary pressure on wages and utilities not matched by a rise in fee rates from local authorities.

While National Living Wage levels continue to rise very significantly, most local authorities did not agree to mirror this increase with sufficient uplift. After more than a decade of limited increases we are finding the de facto cuts in funding increasingly difficult to sustain in adults social care. Some services are coming very close to not achieving full cost recovery and some care packages are already at that point.

In Sutherland House School this has been offset to a degree by the cost spreading due to the increased number of children.

f. Material risk management objectives and policies
Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking to make a wide range of cost savings.

g. Principal funding

The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Autism East Midlands were the beneficiaries of a large legacy from the estate of Eileen Burley in year. We are extremely grateful for the opportunities that this legacy gives us to expand on the aspects of our support that is not funded by statutory agencies.

Trustees have agreed to designate this funding to support the expansion of our employment support offer and to develop a social enterprise that will enable the employment of more autistic people.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Group and the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co opted under the terms of the Memorandum of Association.

c. Organisational structure and decision-making policies

During the year under review, the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and non residential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

d. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

e. Pay policy for key management personnel

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 10 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in Note 11 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 25.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff, this year whilst most staff received a second pay rise this was not applied to anyone in a management position. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past, a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain high calibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

f. Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

Future developments

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop an additional school in a different county. To this end after the year end AEM purchased the Old Rectory at Braithwell in South Yorkshire to open as a school.

The development of old Fire Station in Worksop was delayed due to issues with planning that have now been resolved. This will open in the next financial year as a new day service.

Members' liability

The Members of the Charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the Charity in the event of winding up.

Engagement with employees and employment of the disabled

Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them by means of regular consultative committee and staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The Group and the Charity carry out exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and have adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees.

The group and the company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of employment matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are under represented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Statement

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

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 Group and the Charity and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, 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 of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditor is aware of that information..

Auditor

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, was appointed by the Trustees as part of an open tender process.

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, has indicated his willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditor at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith

Trustee

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial activities, the Consolidated balance sheet, the Charity balance sheet, the Consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant 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 of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 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 in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Group's or the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve 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.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual 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.

Opinion 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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 Group's and the parent 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 Group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our assessment focused on key laws and regulations the company has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, employment law and relevant tax legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities. Our approach to detecting irregularities included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the entity's policies and procedures and how the entity has complied with these, and through discussions;
- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the entity and how the entity is complying with that framework;
- obtaining an understanding of the entity's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- designing our audit procedures to respond to our risk assessment; and
- performing audit testing over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias, specifically around amounts due to group undertakings.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also consider the likelihood of detection of fraud based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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.

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. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members 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 and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Kevin Hodgetts FCA (Senior statutory auditor)
for and on behalf of
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor
Cubo Birmingham
4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square
Birmingham
B3 3AX

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	2	425	36	461	314
Charitable activities	4	3,543		3,543	3,456
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	11,908		11,908	10,513
Investments	5	9		9	4
Other Income	6	38		38	81
TOTAL INCOME		**15,923**	**36**	**15,959**	**14,368**
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	9,610		9,610	10,926
Charitable activities	7	4,772	31	4,803	4,111
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**14,382**	**31**	**14,413**	**15,037**
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)		**1,541**	**5**	**1,546**	**(669)**
Transfers between Funds	17	12	(12)		
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES)		**1,553**	**(7)**	**1,546**	**(669)**
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	23	1,327		1,327	10,668
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**2,880**	**(7)**	**2,873**	**9,999**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		6,674	153	6,827	(3,172)
Net movement in funds		2,880	(7)	2,873	9,999
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**9,554**	**146**	**9,700**	**6,827**

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,078		7,722
			7,078		7,722
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	2,443		3,268	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,405		1,124	
		6,848		**4,392**	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,923)		(1,605)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**4,925**		**2,787**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**12,003**		**10,509**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,353)		(1,499)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			**10,650**		**9,010**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23		(950)		(2,183)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**9,700**		**6,827**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	17		146		153
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension asset	17	10,504		8,857	
Pension reserve	17	(950)		(2,183)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		9,554		6,674
TOTAL FUNDS			**9,700**		**6,827**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Charity Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,078		7,722
			7,078		7,722
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	5,385		3,957	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,246		847	
		6,631		4,804	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	**(1,706)**		**(1,474)**	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**4,925**		**3,330**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**12,003**		**11,052**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,353)		(1,500)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			**10,650**		**9,552**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23		(950)		(2,183)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**9,700**		**7,369**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds:	17	146		153	
Total restricted funds:	17		146		153
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds:	17	10,504		9,399	
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	17	10,504		9,399	
Pension reserve	17	(950)		(2,183)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		9,554		7,216
TOTAL FUNDS			**9,700**		**7,369**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£000	£000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities		3,167	(2,332)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		518	443
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(404)	(1,112)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES		**114**	**(669)**
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		**3,281**	**(3,001)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**1,124**	**4,125**
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR		4,405	1,124

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in the United Kingdom. The address of its registered office is given on the Charity Information page.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity.

The significant accounting policies that have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

1.3 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.4 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset class and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Charity's accounting policies.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Charity which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.5 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.6 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable activities are costs incurred by the company in the delivery of its activities undertaken to further the purposes of the company, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

1.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the bases outlined below.

At each reporting date the company assesses whether there is any indication of impairment. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined to be the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	-	2% - 10% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	10% - 100% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulations are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.8 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Consolidated statement of financial activities.

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.9 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Consolidated statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.10 Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The profits of the subsidiary undertaking are gift aided to Autism East Midlands.

1.11 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.12 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.13 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

1.14 Government grants

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance- related conditions, there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

1.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.16 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the Trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

1.17 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Donations	45	36	81
Legacies	380		380
Total 2024	**425**	**36**	**461**

	Unrestricted funds 2023	*Restricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Donations	*49*	*65*	*114*
Legacies	*200*		*200*
Total 2024	*249*	*65*	*314*

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - NET INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of results pre-distribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £1,328k (2023: £130k). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £428k (2023: £NIL).

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	*Unrestricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income	5,757	5,757	*4,600*	*4,600*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income	6,151	6,151	*5,914*	*5,914*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses	(4,429)	(4,429)	*(4,470)*	*(4,470)*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses	(5,181)	(5,181)	*(6,456)*	*(6,456)*
	2,298	**2,298**	*(412)*	*(412)*

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	*Unrestricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
		£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Provision of services		3,543	3,543	*3,456*	*3,456*

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	*Unrestricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Bank interest	9	9	*4*	*4*

6. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	*Unrestricted funds 2023*	*Restricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
Other income	38	38	*68*		*68*
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund				*14*	*14*
TOTAL 2023	**38**	**38**	*68*	*14*	*82*

7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	*Unrestricted funds 2023*	*Restricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
Provision of services	4,772	31	4,803	*3,972*	*139*	*4,111*

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2024	Support costs 2024	Total funds 2024	*Activities undertaken directly 2023*	*Restricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	£000	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
Provision of services	2,902	1,901	4,803	*2,234*	*1,876*	*4,110*

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2024	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	*£000*
Pension finance costs	102	*322*
Staff costs	9,060	*7,982*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(7,134)	*(8,275)*
Agency costs	874	*2,205*
Total 2024	**2,902**	*2,234*

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (continued)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2024	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	*£000*
Staff costs	917	*1,115*
Depreciation	529	*582*
Other staff costs	196	*154*
Premises costs	1,079	*907*
IT costs	314	*362*
Legal & professional costs	132	*226*
Insurance costs	211	*208*
Travel costs	178	*193*
Other support costs	356	*484*
Office costs	214	*85*
Governance costs	33	*25*
Marketing costs	20	*22*
Catering costs	197	*163*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(2,475)	*(2,650)*
Total 2024	1,901	*1,876*

9. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor for the audit of the Group's annual accounts	19	*20*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor in respect of:		
All taxation compliance services not included above	3	*1*
All assurance services not included above	1	
All non-audit services not included above	4	

10. STAFF COSTS

	Group 2024	*Group 2023*	Company 2024	*Company 2023*
	£000	*£000*	£000	*£000*
Wages and salaries	8,710	*7,760*	8,710	*7,760*
Social security costs	732	*702*	732	*702*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	415	*388*	415	*388*
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	120	*247*	120	*247*
	9,977	*9,097*	9,977	*9,097*

Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes have been restated in 2023 to remove the net interest charge on the local government pension scheme £331k as this does not represent a staff cost.

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	Group 2024	*Group 2023*	Charity 2024	*Charity 2023*
	No.	*No.*	No.	*No.*
Teaching staff	94	*104*	94	*104*
Care staff	279	*231*	279	*231*
Management and Administration	36	*34*	36	*34*
	409	*369*	409	*369*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2024	*Group 2023*
	No.	*No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	1	
In the band £70,001 - £80,000		*1*
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	*1*
In the band £110,000 - £120,000		*1*
In the band £120,000 - £130,000	1	

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, the Director of Corporate Services, the Finance Director and Headteacher. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £437k (2023: £420k).

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023: £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2024, expenses totalling £526 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2023: £659 to 1 Trustee).

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group and Company

	Freehold property	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Office Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost						
At 1 April 2023	10,237	257	25	1,020	518	12,057
Additions	285			66	53	404
Disposals	(656)					(656)
At 31 March 2024	9,866	257	25	1,086	571	11,805
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2023	3,223	257	25	830		4,335
Charge for the year	446			83		529
On disposals	(137)					(137)
At 31 March 2024	3,532	257	25	913		4,727
Net book value						
At 31 March 2024	6,334			173	571	7,078
At 31 March 2023	*7,014*			*190*	*518*	*7,722*

Freehold property cost at 1 April 2023 has been restated by £518k. The Worksop Firestation project costs have been reclassified to assets under construction as the assets were not available for use for charitable purposes at 1 April 2023.

13. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

Company investments in subsidiary companies totalled £6 at 31 March 2024 (2023: £6).

Principal Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

Company	Company number	Basis of control	Holding	Included in consolidation
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	08056114	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	03381476	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

Company	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Profit / (Loss) for the year £000	Net assets £000
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	6,151	(5,181)	970	3
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	5,757	(4,429)	1,328	51

14. DEBTORS

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2024	*2023*	**2024**	*2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**2,019**	*2,669*	**445**	*742*
Amounts owed by group undertakings			**4,603**	*2,857*
Other debtors	**49**	*13*	**21**	*13*
Prepayments and accrued income	**375**	*586*	**316**	*345*
	2,443	*3,268*	**5,385**	*3,957*

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2024	*2023*	**2024**	*2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Bank loans	**147**	*142*	**147**	*142*
Trade creditors	**231**	*565*	**231**	*449*
Other taxation and social security	**856**	*487*	**856**	*487*
Other creditors	**110**	*83*	**112**	*82*
Accruals and deferred income	**579**	*328*	**360**	*314*
	1,923	*1,605*	**1,706**	*1,474*

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2024	*2023*	**2024**	*2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Bank loans	**1,353**	*1,499*	**1,353**	*1,499*

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2024	*2023*	**2024**	*2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Between one and two years				
Bank loans	**151**	*146*	**151**	*146*
Between two and five years				
Bank loans	**479**	*465*	**479**	*465*
Over five years				
Bank loans	**723**	*887*	**723**	*887*

The aggregate amount of liabilities payable or repayable wholly or in part more than five years after the reporting date is:

	Group	*Group*	Charity	*Charity*
	2024	*2023*	**2024**	*2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Repayable by instalments	**723**	*887*	**723**	*887*

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% respectively and repayments are repayable monthly.

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
DESIGNATED FUNDS						
Designated Funds - all funds		381				381
GENERAL FUNDS						
General Funds - all funds						
All funds	9,399	3,634	(4,678)	1,768		10,123
Reserves -						
Subsidiaries	(542)	11,908	(9,610)	(1,756)		
Pension reserve	(2,183)		(94)		1,327	(950)
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	**6,674**	**15,923**	**14,382)**	**12**	**1,327**	**9,554**

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (Continued)

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7					7
Jones Trust - Science Lab	21			(4)		17
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	38					38
Wilson Foundation	4		(4)			
BNA Charitable Organisation	63		(17)	(8)		38
The Lady Hind Trust	3		(2)			1
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	14			(5)		9
John Eastwood Foundation	1		(1)			
Old Heanorians	2		(1)			1
Gilander Foundation-Children of Northampton		5				5
Wolfson Grant		31		(1)		30
Next			(6)	6		
	153	**36**	**(31)**	**(12)**		**146**
Total of funds	**6,827**	**15,959**	**(14,413)**		**1,327**	**9,700**

Designated funds - set aside for employment and social enterprise.

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a program to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The National Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation - this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Jones Trust - Science Lab represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school.

Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Children in Need - Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton - a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

BNA Charitable Organisation - Funding received from the BNA Charitable Organisation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Old Heanorians - This funding received from Old Heanorians is to support the Heanor Family Support Hub.

The Lady Hind Trust - Funding received from The Lady Hind Trust contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust - Funding received from Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust contributes towards the redevelopment of the school courtyard and garden at Sutherland House School.

John Eastwood Foundation - Funding received from John Eastwood Foundation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Gilander Foundation - Children of Northampton - This represents a donation to support the children of Northamptonshire.

Wolfson Grant - To facilitate the refurbishment of a legacy property to become an education training house for our Autistic service users and school children.

Next - This represent a donation to provide equipment for the sensory room at the Hamilton Lodge Day Center

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	*Income*	*Expenditure*	*Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2023*
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Funds - all funds	*9,114*	*3,776*	*(3,638)*	*147*		*9,399*
Reserves - subsidiaries		*10,513*	*(10,926)*	*(129)*		*(542)*
Pension reserve	*(12,517)*		*(334)*		*10,668*	*(2,183)*
	(3,403)	***14,289***	***(14,898)***	***18***	***10,668***	***6,674***
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	*7*					*7*
Jones Trust - Science Lab	*17*			*4*		*21*
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	*38*					*38*
Wilson Foundation	*9*		*(5)*			*4*
Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	*63*		*(63)*			
Children in Need	*18*	*37*	*(43)*	*(12)*		
BNA Charitable Organisation	*75*		*(5)*	*(7)*		*63*
Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund		*14*	*(14)*			
The Lady HindTrust		*3*				*3*
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust		*25*	*(8)*	*(3)*		*14*
John Eastwood Foundation		*1*				*1*
Old Heanorians	*3*		*(1)*			*2*
TOTAL OF FUNDS	***230***	***80***	***(139)***	***(18)***		***153***
Total of funds	***(3,173)***	***14,369***	***(15,037)***		***10,668***	***6,827***

18. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Designated Funds		381				381
General Funds	6,674	15,542	(14,382)	12	1,327	9,173
Restricted funds	153	36	(31)	(12)		146
	6,827	**15,959**	**(14,413)**		**1,327**	**9,700**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	*Income*	*Expenditure*	*Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2023*
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Funds	*(3,403)*	*14,289*	*(14,898)*	*18*	*10,668*	*6,674*
Restricted funds	*230*	*80*	*(139)*	*(18)*		*153*
	(3,173)	***14,369***	***(15,037)***		***10,668***	***6,827***

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Tangible fixed assets	7,019	59	7,078
Current assets	6,762	87	6,849
Creditors due within one year	(1,923)		(1,923)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,353)		(1,353)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(950)		(950)
Total	**9,555**	**146**	**9,701**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Unrestricted funds 2023	*Restricted funds 2023*	*Total funds 2023*
	£000	*£000*	*£000*
Tangible fixed assets	7,665	57	7,722
Current assets	4,296	96	4,392
Creditors due within one year	(1,605)		(1,605)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,499)		(1,499)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(2,183)		(2,183)
Total	**6,674**	**153**	**6,827**

20. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Group	*Group*
	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Net income/expenditure for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**1,546**	*(669)*
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation charges	**529**	*582*
Impairment of property valuation		*13*
Loss/(Profit) on the sale of fixed assets	**1**	*(158)*
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	**825**	*(2,334)*
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	**172**	*(100)*
FRS102 pension adjustments	**94**	*334*
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**3,167**	*(2,332)*

21. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	Group	*Group*
	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Cash in hand	**4,405**	*1,124*
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	**4,405**	*1,124*

22. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	At 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Cash at bank and in hand	1,124	3,281	4,405
Debt due within 1 year	(142)	(5)	(147)
Debt due after 1 year	(1,499)	146	(1,353)
	(517)	**3,422**	**2,905**

23. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Group operates a defined benefit pension scheme.

Retirement benefits to employees of the Group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 March 2024 was £160k (2023: £269k), of which employer's contributions totalled £128k (2023: £235k) and employees' contributions totalled £32k (2023: £34k). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.3% for employers and 12.5% for employees.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	At 31 March 2024	*At 31 March 2023*
	%	*%*
Discount rate	**4.9**	*4.8*
Expected return on scheme assets	**2.95**	*2.95*
Future salary increases	**2.95**	*2.95*

23. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

	At 31 March 2024	*At 31 March 2023*
	Years	*Years*
Mortality rates (in years)		
for a male aged 65 now	**20.4**	*20.7*
at 65 for a male aged 45 now	**21.7**	*22*
for a female aged 65 now	**23.3**	*23.5*
at 65 for a female aged 45 now	**24.7**	*25*

Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 March 2024	*At 31 March 2023*
	£000	*£000*
Discount rate +0.1%	**22,824**	*22,945*
Discount rate -0.1%	**23,573**	*23,704*
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	**23,982**	*24,117*
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	**22,434**	*22,551*
Pension increase rate +0.1%	**23,568**	*23,698*
Pension decrease rate -0.1%	**22,829**	*22,951*

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	Fair value at 31 March 2024	*Fair value at 31 March 2023*
	£000	*£000*
Equities	**14,164**	*13,105*
Gilts	**533**	*437*
Corporate bonds	**1,104**	*1,252*
Property	**2,365**	*2,509*
Cash and other liquid assets	**1,339**	*1,106*
Inflation Plus	**1,131**	*1,067*
Infrastructure	**1,608**	*1,661*
Total fair value of assets	**22,244**	*21,137*

The actual return on scheme assets was a gain of £1,882k (2023: loss of £454k).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Current service cost	**110**	*238*
Interest on obligation	**102**	*322*
Administrative expenses	**10**	*9*
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities	**222**	*569*

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Opening defined benefit obligation	**23,320**	*34,409*
Current service cost	**110**	*238*
Interest cost	**1,101**	*887*
Contributions by scheme participants	**32**	*34*
Actuarial gains	**(565)**	*(11,618)*
Benefits paid	**(804)**	*(630)*
Closing defined benefit obligation	**23,194**	*23,320*

Movements in the fair value of the Group's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2024	*2023*
	£000	*£000*
Opening fair value of scheme assets	**21,137**	*21,892*
Interest income	**999**	*565*
Administrative expenses	**(10)**	*(9)*
Actuarial (losses)/gains	**762**	*(950)*
Contributions by employer	**128**	*235*
Contributions by scheme participants	**32**	*34*
Benefits paid	**(804)**	*(630)*
Closing fair value of scheme assets	**22,244**	*21,137*

24. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2024 the Group and the Charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2024	*Group 2023*	Group 2024	*Group 2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Not later than 1 year	**94**	*211*	**94**	*211*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**7**	*78*	**7**	*78*
	101	*289*	**101**	*289*

The Charity renewed their lease for Unit 31, Crags Industrial Estate, Morven Street, Cresswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ in September 2024 for a further 10 years.

The following lease payments have been recognised as an expense in the Statement of financial activities:

	Group 2024	*Group 2023*	Group 2024	*Group 2023*
	£000	*£000*	**£000**	*£000*
Operating lease rentals	**211**	*134*	**211**	*134*

25. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year, recharges from Autism East Midlands to Norsaca (Trading) Limited were £5,181k (2023: £6,455k) and recharges from Autism East Midlands to Sutherland House (Trading) Limited were £4,429k (2023: £4,470k).

As at 31 August 2024, Nosaca (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £2,488k (2023: £1,573k) and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £2,114k (2023: £1,283k).

26. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

Autism East Midlands purchased The Old Rectory, Holywell Lane, Braithwell, Rotherham, S66 7AF on 11 April 2024 for consideration of £1.2m. The Charity plans to refurbish the property and open a new school.

Effective 1 December 2024, Derbyshire Autism Services Group merged with Autism East Midlands. Upon merger, Derbyshire Autism Services Group assets and liabilities transfer to Autism East Midlands and Derbyshire Autism Services Group ceases to operate as an individual entity.



AEM Autism East Midlands

For more information...
W aem.org.uk
T 01909 506 678
E enquiries@aem.org.uk
Autism East Midlands

Our achievements over the past year have been the result of the work of our dedicated staff, combined with the significant support of all our partners. If you would like to get involved in our work, we would love to hear from you.

This information can be provided in a more accessible format by contacting **enquiries@aem.org.uk**

Registered office: Autism East Midlands, Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate, Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 4AJ
Registered charity no. 517954
Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England no. 2053860

AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales - Charity number 517954

Accounts

Annual Review
2022 - 2023

AEM
Autism East Midlands



Welcome
to Autism East Midlands

George Smith: Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I would like to thank our staff for another year in which their dedication and care has shone through. As always, I am struck by the fact that without their ongoing commitment, we would not be able to offer the excellent support that we provide.



It was with this in mind that the Board of Trustees gave frontline staff a second pay rise in December 2022. This was in conjunction with other initiatives to support staff with the cost-of-living crisis over the difficult winter period. We did this knowing that this meant that the organisation was under some financial pressure for the second half of the year.

Many local authorities have again indicated that we will receive below inflation uplifts in 2023. After more than a decade of 'efficiency gains' we need a change of approach if adults' social care is to survive.

With this in mind we are increasingly grateful to all of our supporters who have fundraised on our behalf or left us a gift in their will. These pots of funding continue to be crucial to pay for those difficult to fund services such as Family Support and Employment Support.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Jane Howson: Chief Executive Officer

In 2022/23, as we have returned to normal from the pandemic, we have seen people rebuild those old routines and return to activities that they enjoy. This is really good to see. As we move forward, we will continue to expand our offer and open up new opportunities.

You will see in the stories throughout this annual review what a difference our services make to the lives of the people we support. As our Chair of Trustees has said, we could not do any of this without great, highly motivated staff that live and breathe the values of the organisation every single day. I am hugely grateful to each and every one of them.

It is great to read the staff profile stories and how we have supported staff to develop their careers with AEM at a pace that suits them. This year has seen us appoint two new Deputy Directors from within our ranks. Katie Weightman and Ben Brown have hit the ground running and are making a massive contribution to the wider running of adults' services. In school we have seen Suzannah Diamantis, Milly Murray and Laura Conway promoted to the Senior Leadership team. Here we have had another successful year for students by every measure.

The combination of the talent above makes me extremely optimistic for the future of AEM despite the difficult financial environment we face.



About AEM

We've been supporting autistic people and their families since 1968.

Our charity was founded by a small group of parents in Nottingham, who were seeking a better future for their children. Two years after launching the charity, Sutherland House School was opened to its first students.

It soon it became clear that there was a need for services for adults too and we opened our very first accommodation-based service in Worksop for adults. Today? Well, we now provide support to families across the region from Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire through to Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire.

Our services include:

- Residential support
- Support living services
- Flexible day services
- Respite
- Employment support
- Family support hubs
- Parent workshops
- Children's activities
- And specialist education at Sutherland House School.

While we've grown, our support is still very much led by our service users. We strongly believe that each person we support should feel heard, valued, in control, independent, respected, and included.

What did we do?

Our year in pictures



The doors opened at Whitegates; our new service in Worksop, offering specialist respite support for autistic individuals, their families and carers all year round.



Brand new Sensory Cafe sessions were introduced firstly at our Mundy Street Day service before being rolled out across other services too.



It's not every day that you get to share gardening tips with royalty, but that's exactly what happened for two Duke of Edinburgh students from Sutherland House School when they got to meet the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit to Stonebridge City Farm in Nottingham.



Sutherland House School got its own library



It was celebrations all round at Sutherland House School with the release of the GCSE results. An impressive 86% of GCSE entries achieved Grade 4 and above and there were 35 successful Entry Level accreditations.



Clock enthusiast Adam from our Retford service enjoyed a day out in London dedicated to searching out all the famous clocks throughout the city.



Huge snooker fan, Joanne was thrilled to see world number one player, Ronnie O'Sullivan, play at Mansfield Civic Centre. And her day was totally made when she got a signed picture of her sporting hero.



Bamboozle Theatre Company performed their magical 'Firebird' show for students at Sutherland House School. At the end the whole school took part in an impressive group performance.

Youngsters put their skills to the ultimate test when our Northamptonshire Service organised a special trip to a local escape room experience. They got the chance to learn new skills and meet new friends, whilst having loads of fun.



During National Afternoon Tea Week in August, our Poplars service opened up their garden and invited family and friends over for tea and cake.

In the lead up to Christmas, our services had lots of fun decorating their festive trees and, for the first time in three years, everyone was able to gather for a big Christmas get-together. There was food, music, dancing, and lots of smiles.





A wide variety of activities were organised over the summer. The guys from our Hamilton service headed off for a day trip to the Crich Tramway Village. They enjoy all things transport related and loved their time in the Derbyshire transport museum.

Youngsters from our Northamptonshire Children and Young People's Service enjoyed a wide variety of activities over the year. They ranged from visits to escape rooms and country parks to this trip to Herrings Green Farm in Bedfordshire, where they got the chance to handle some of the owls.



In the lead up to Halloween, our Beechwood service had so much fun taking their pick of the pumpkins before getting them ready for a pumpkin carving competition.



Sutherland House School

Education for young autistic people

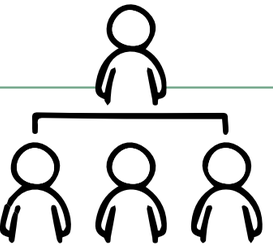
Here at the school, we're passionate about providing the very best education for children and young people with a diagnosis of autism.

Our dedicated teaching and support professionals work together to enable our students to discover their full potential. We want to give them every opportunity to reach their goals.

Students range from the age of three through to the age of 19 and whatever their needs or abilities, we tailor our support to meet their specific needs.

Moving on, moving up

At Sutherland House School we love to celebrate all that goes on for our students during their years with us, but we are acutely aware that our role as a place of education is to successfully prepare our young people for their next steps in life. We would like to share some examples of the remarkable achievements and transitions our young people have made as they progress towards adulthood.



4 employment engagement talks and visits were organised for students as part of their careers programme



62 students attended Sutherland House School.

86% of GCSE entries at Sutherland House School achieved Grade 4 and above

– and there were 35 successful Entry Level accreditations



4 companies provided work experience opportunities for students



Adam engaging in a technology event with Ideagen Software Solutions

Adam - *Work Experience*

Having spent a number of years at Sutherland House School exploring his specific interest in computing and developing his knowledge and skills in this area with the support of key teaching staff, Adam (Y14), embarked on a long-term placement with IT management service, Addooco. Initially the team around Adam were conscious of the significant professional and technical demands that would be placed on Adam in undertaking the role of IT Technician and Advisor, but a few weeks in and it was clear that he was well-prepared for this challenge. Adam has now maintained his placement for the majority of an academic year and been successful in building professional relationships and executing his responsibilities with skill and aptitude.

Stefan
Confetti College

After a number of years with Sutherland House School, Stefan began to express a wish to return to mainstream, post-16 education, to be able to pursue study in game development. With this in mind, the team around Stefan worked hard to support him in securing strong outcomes at GCSE, to enable him to enter his chosen course at Confetti College, Nottingham. Sure enough, Stefan passed his English and maths GCSEs with strong grades and was able to transition to his Level 1 course in Creative Technology. Approaching the end of the term, and not only are the college suggesting that Stefan jumps to Level 3 accreditation, due to his skill and aptitude, but he has also taken on the role of Student Representative petitioning for a gym and healthy foods to be available at the college. Both Stefan and his parents feel that Sutherland House School, and the staff who supported him, had a pivotal role in his success, and we cannot overstate how proud we are of all he has achieved.



Stefan enjoying some of his active pursuits - climbing and running.

Raushan
Portland College

Raushan is another of our students who has made a successful transition into further education, this time within a specialist setting, Portland College. Raushan worked hard with teaching staff to secure core functional skills in English and maths, alongside a broad curriculum, during his time with us, and this well-prepared him for continuing in an educational pathway. Raushan has chosen his main area of study to be horticulture, and his family attribute his keen interest in the area to his experience and work on the Sutherland House School allotments. Parents confirmed with us recently that the local authority have now agreed funding for another year in further education for Raushan, which is testament to his current success.



Raushan pruning some of the trees at the school allotment

Reaching potential
Our extra-curricular activities

Education doesn't just take place within the classroom. Extra-curricular activity and careers guidance is also a big part of what is offered. We have a busy programme of activities that positively engages our students and opens up opportunities and provides valuable work experience.

This year included the Think Big programme, which introduced students to careers in technology and how technology is embedded into sport. The sessions were delivered by Nottingham Forest Community Trust and included a trip to the football ground to watch a home match and meet the club manager Steve Cooper.

Reflecting on their day, student, Ethan Barnett said he was very keen to watch Nottingham Forest again and has been wearing his scarf in school with pride. *"I enjoyed the game, the pictures, pretty much everything,"* he said. *"The highlight of the whole day was meeting big old Stevie Cooper."*



Positive impacts

Staff and students were involved in the creation of a new Careers, Work and Employment resource. Our Speech & Language Therapy team and Careers team at Sutherland House School played a big part in its development, working with social enterprise Talking Mats to create something that would have a positive impact on youngsters including our students.

Adult Services

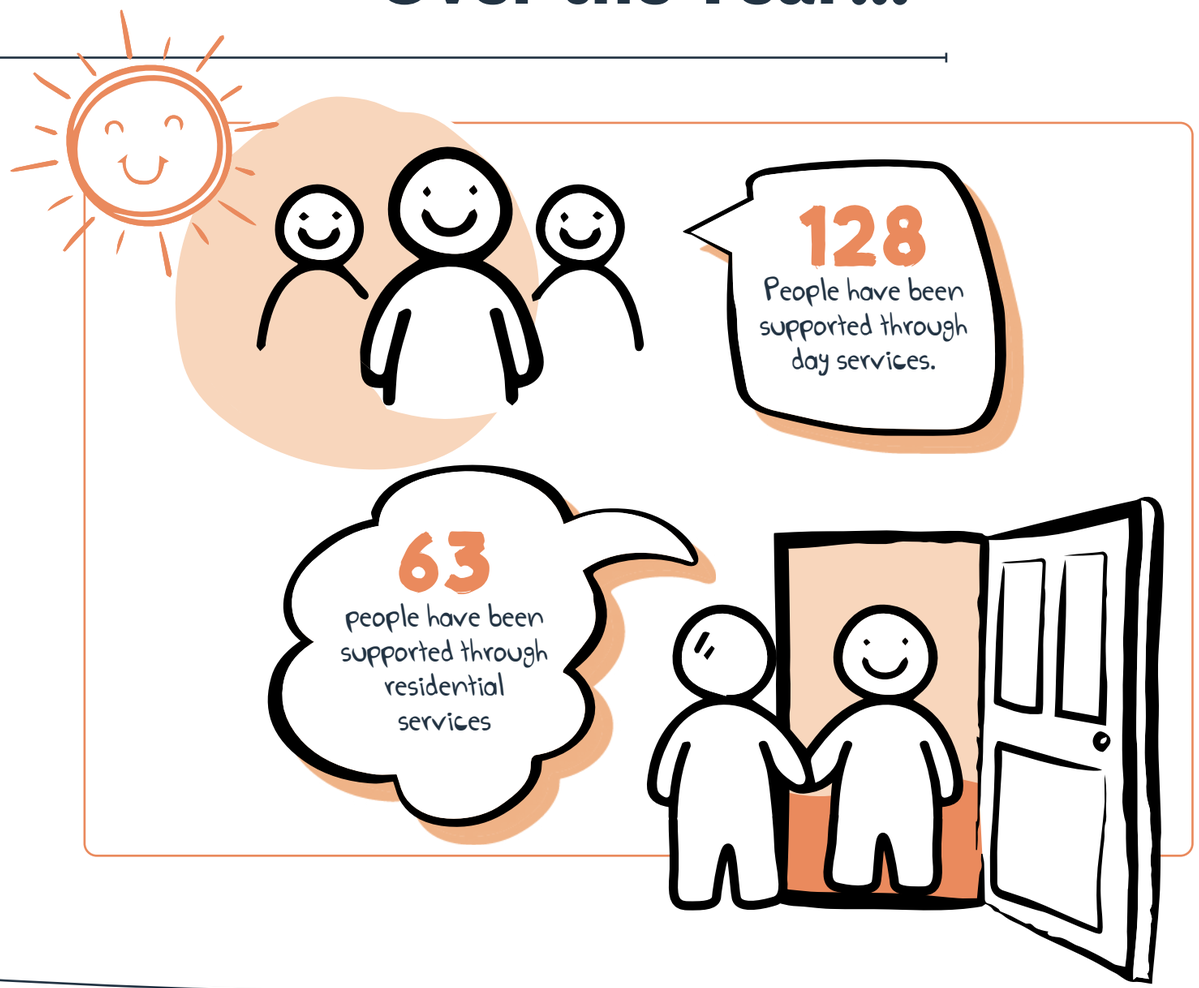
Providing a positive experience

We're passionate about ensuring that each person we support receives the best care and support we can give.

We recognise each person's strengths and interests and enable them to lead their best life, supporting them, boosting their self-confidence, keeping them safe, and encouraging their independence.

Support is carried out through various ways including residential services, day services and respite. We've shared some of our stories over the following pages.

Over the Year...



Alec's Story - *Respite Support*

Alec accesses both day provision at our Mundy Street centre and, more recently, respite at our provision in Worksop.

Prior to 2020 he was able to access respite, until it was paused during the pandemic. Like many families, the impact of pausing respite support during the pandemic was significant. It was actually a time when Alec needed more support. He required new coping strategies to meet both the challenges of lockdown and not having additional support to carry out the activities he enjoys, specifically ones away from the family home.

With no planned respite, it also put extra pressure on his family. As he has complex health conditions as well as his primary diagnosis of autism, it meant his family slept around the clock at his bedside to ensure he remained well. It was exhausting and impacted both Alec and his family. As with many families, holidays were placed on pause, celebrations and events were interrupted and priorities shifted to dealing with the complex nature of the family member wellbeing.

Opening our provision at Worksop was a welcome relief for Alec and his family, who are now accessing the service. The flexibility of Whitegates respite support now means that Mum can be supported to allocate days that provide essential breaks. More recently, Alec was able to access a lengthier stay at Whitegates so that his family could take a short break to celebrate Alec's sister's prom and close of exams. They could leave him with the team, in the knowledge that he was being supported and thriving at Whitegates respite.

His family said:
"The facilities are fantastic, providing a safe and secure environment for Alec. He loves to play in the garden."



Callum's Story - *Day Services*

Callum had been through a challenging time which led to him moving out of his family home and into a new flat. Our staff at Mundy Street supported Callum through this transitional period and we were all really proud of how he coped with so many changes to his normal routines.

The flat that Callum initially moved into was only a temporary placement. However, during his time living there he made the decision that he would like to find his own flat to live in permanently. Callum has since visited a brand new flat and chosen where he would like to live. He is counting down the days until he can move in and is really looking forward to his new-found independence becoming permanent.

Throughout all of the change to routine, Callum continued to come to Mundy Street with a big smile on his face. Staff working with Callum were always looking out for news ideas and came across an opportunity for fans to meet the band Steps! Callum absolutely loves Steps so jumped at the opportunity to go and meet them himself. Staff called ahead beforehand to make sure that everything would run smoothly for Callum and then off he went, with a picnic in tow, to HMV in Nottingham to meet his favourite band.

Callum had such a great time and received a signed CD from the band. He asked all of the important questions including asking Ian H Watkins what time he goes to bed in the evening. Ian's fellow band member, Claire Richards even confirmed he snores. If the day couldn't get any better Callum made it to ITV's evening news! Viewers were able to even hear Callum singing at the top of his voice to Tragedy on the clip. Callum enjoyed his experience so much that it is usually one of the first stories he like to tell new people he meets and sometimes he will even bring in his signed copy of their latest album to show others too as it is one of his favourite possessions. The team at Mundy Street were really grateful that they were able to support Callum to realise a dream of his.



Andy's Story - *Residential Support*

All of the rules, regulations and restrictions that came along with COVID-19 had a massive impact on Andy's day-to-day life. It meant that he couldn't go out and do things he enjoys, like bowling and swimming. It also meant he couldn't meet up with his friends to go his drama classes and it also prevented him from volunteering in a local charity shop.

Being able to access all of these places independently held great importance to Andy and it really knocked his confidence being unable to do so for such an extended period of time.

Since all the regulations have been lifted, Andy has been really keen to get back out there and start enjoying the things he did before. However, he has found some of this challenging due to the disruption to his routine and the knock-on effect it had on his confidence.

The Beechwood staff team have been supporting Andy to take smaller steps to gradually increase his independence again at a rate that he feels comfortable with. Andy has returned to his volunteer placement at the local charity shop. He is also taking a much more active role in managing his finances and goes to the bank with staff now to withdraw his own money. He has also resumed his drama classes and although he asked staff to support him on the bus initially, he is now feeling ready to start travelling independently again to meet his friends for food beforehand and then attend the class.

Now Andy has re-gained the level of independence he enjoyed pre-COVID, he's now looking to the future for other areas he could develop in. He has expressed to staff that he would now like to start looking into paid employment opportunities to use the skills he has gained by volunteering. He would also like to gain more independence around managing his medication. Andy commented that having more independence "makes me feel good."

Daniel's Story

Writing my own positive behaviour support plan

Daniel spent time with his AEM autism practitioner, Katie to look through his Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) and to see if there were any changes he wanted to make. He asked if he could have a blank copy so he could make his own notes on each section.

Daniel worked through each section, and Katie explained what each section was about and how it helped staff to be able to better support him. He then wrote notes for each section and he thought really carefully about what makes a good day for him and how staff can help him to have a good day.

He was able to reflect on previous experiences where he has felt anxious and used this to tell Katie how staff could help him in a similar situation in the future. Daniel commented that working on his own PBSP helped him to reflect and better understand his own needs and how he wants to be supported. Daniel also commented that being able to contribute to his own PBSP made him feel independent and like he mattered.

Daniel is one of our first service users to use the new PBSP format. He compared this to his previous PBSP and said he felt the new one was easy to read and understand and allowed for lots of detail.

He wrote on the evidencing good practice page "Adequate work. Meets my needs to a T!"

Child Services

Providing support and education

We provide a range of activities to support autistic children, their parents, carers and siblings.

This comes in a variety of forms including hosting youth clubs, holiday clubs and trips each month for youngsters, as well as online gaming and baking sessions.

We also host support hubs in 15 locations across the East Midlands. Each group meets on a monthly basis, providing an opportunity for families to get together to chat and gain advice while the children can play or get involved in activities.

Online workshops are also held to give parents and carers an insight and guidance around autism. It often provides a lifeline for parents. One saying: *"I was really concerned about secondary school provision, but I now feel better armed with information about the things I can ask."*

Our team also talks at schools and groups to raise awareness of autism and how to support a young person.

"The Hub sessions are an excellent opportunity for the children to mix with others in a setting other than school. Both enjoy the toys and activities. We have definitely noticed improved socialising."

"Jon benefits greatly from the youth clubs as he gets the opportunity to meet with other autistic children where he can be himself and not worry how he may present. The team are knowledgeable and clearly understand autism, which makes us feel safe with Jon* in your care."*

"The Hub is an excellent forum for parents/carers to socialise and share experiences of caring for neurodivergent children. I have personally given and received support from other parents/carers that I've met through the Hub. Since joining the group, we have had 'play dates' and attended a birthday party with another family."



Our first trip of the year was to the National Sci-Fi and Film Museum at Milton Keynes.

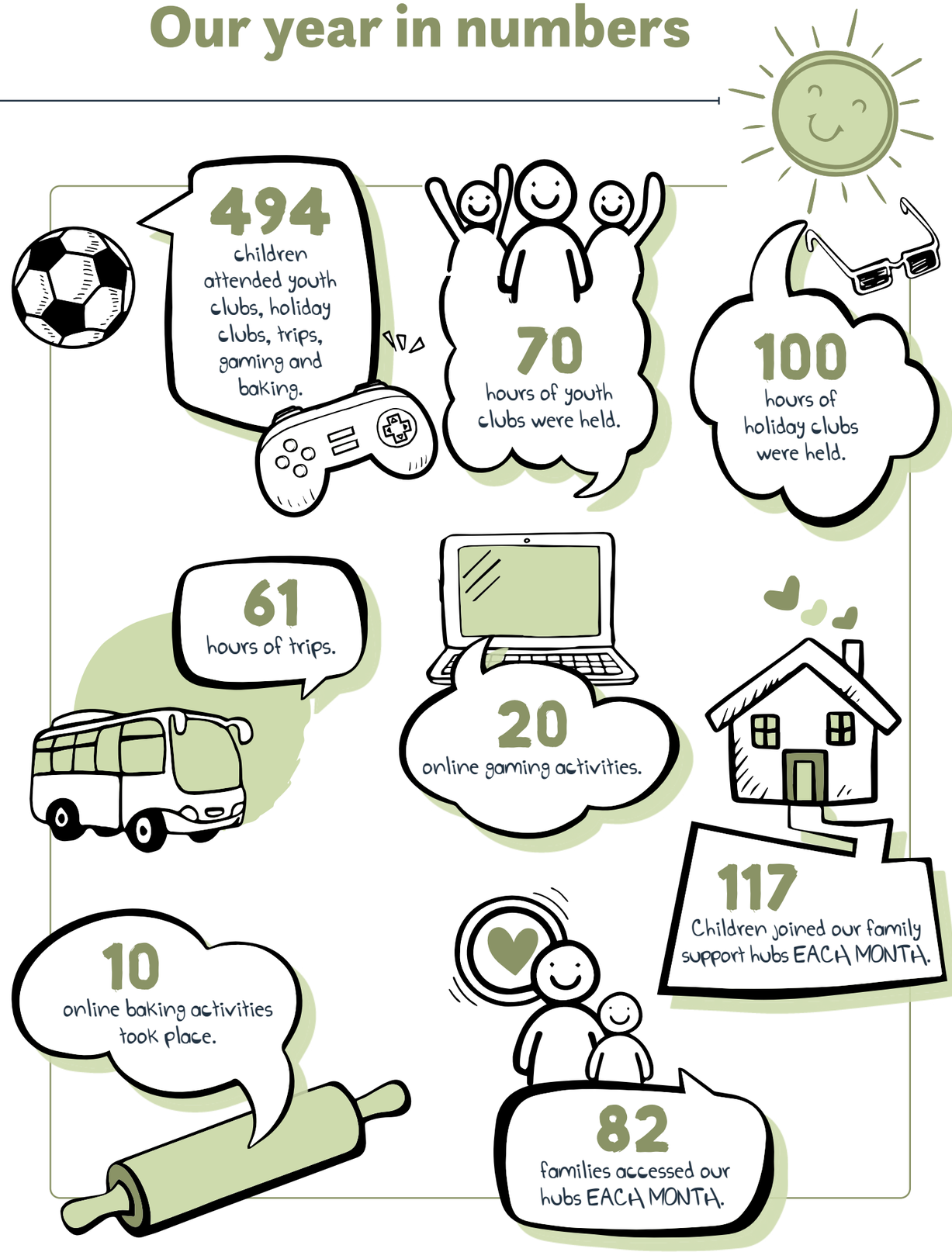


We enjoyed a fishing trip to Castle Ashby in Northampton during one holiday club.



Other highlights included a trip to an Escape Room at Milton Keynes and to the dinosaur themed Jurassic Grill at Rushden Lakes.

Our year in numbers



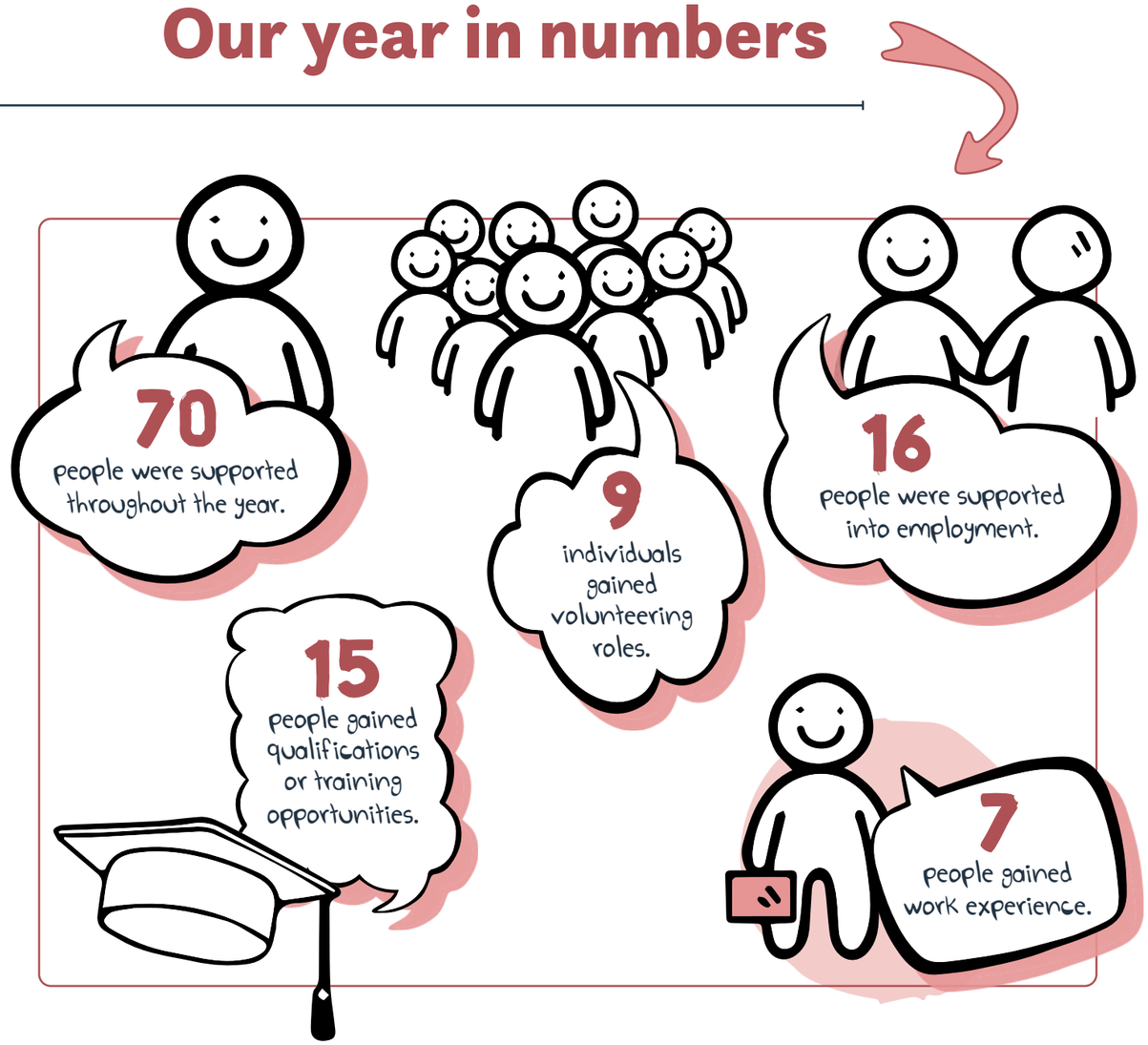
Employment Services

Our Employment Services team helps adults who have a formal diagnosis of autism.

We help people find employment or volunteer roles. Our support might be in the form of helping to create CVs and cover letters or by helping people to find opportunities for work experience.

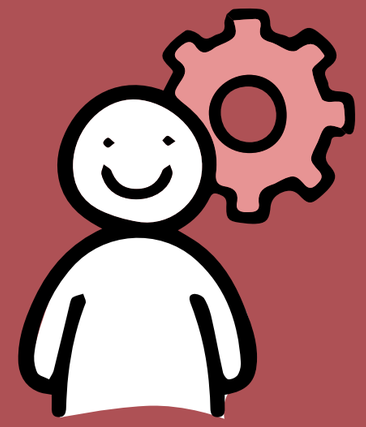
Together we aim to break down the barriers to employment – and help people stay in work too! We want people to find a job that they will love.

Our year in numbers



"I want to say a massive thank you for the support the Employment Services team have offered. It's helped so much just to know there is somebody out there who cares, and to support me if things start to get a bit crazy. It gave me strength when I needed it the most and for that I'm eternally grateful."

Robin, who gained worked for Wren Kitchens



Declan's Story

Declan came to us because he wanted to find a voluntary role. We introduced him to the YMCA, and he was offered the chance to volunteer in one of their charity shops.

His first task was sorting clothes and tagging and pricing them.

Shop manager, Scott Hind said: "Declan has been a pleasure to work with. He learned really fast. He is approachable to customers and is very well-spoken whilst on the shop floor. He has shown initiative and I'm confident he could show any other new starters how to tag and sort clothes with no problems. He's become a real big member of our team."

Christian's Story



Traditional formal interview processes and lengthy job applications are just two of the barriers that often stop autistic jobseekers from finding their dream jobs.

Our team works closely with job seekers to overcome such challenges. This year we worked with supermarket giant, Sainsbury's; a company that prides itself on creating an inclusive environment for employees. We worked with Christian, who secured a role with the supermarket.

Christian, 21, gained a job working within the warehouse at Beeston. It gave him the opportunity to learn new skills and kick start his career. Our team initially met with him, carried out an assessment to see what support he might need and what adjustments might need to be made.

He got the opportunity to visit the site, look around and have an informal chat rather than go through the traditional formal interview process.

Sainsbury's Site Administrator, Daniel Roach said: "I am thrilled to work for an employer where I can be afforded the opportunity to work with and support young neurodivergent people like Christian. He has made great progress in his role and is a testament to what neuro divergent people can be capable of if they are given the right work environments and support."

Our Team

We pride ourselves on developing our staff...

Meet Laura

'I joined Sutherland House School as a Teaching Assistant in 2017. I worked one to one with children with SEN in an early years setting whilst studying at university.

When I joined as a Teaching Assistant I had just finished university and was unsure of what I wanted to do as a career but knew I wanted to help children who found traditional schooling challenging. This was because of my own challenges I faced when I attended school. I turned down a teaching placement in a mainstream school because I felt it would lead me down the wrong path to be able to do this.

When I joined Sutherland House School I did not see myself becoming a teacher at the time, but I fell in love with the school and the children. I loved that the school supported children with very complex needs; children whose needs I know would not be met elsewhere. This was refreshing and challenging at times but also lead to me building so many skills and so much confidence in myself.

I was a Teaching Assistant until April 2019 and was a Positive Behaviour Support Lead until June 2019. I then became a Class Lead and completed my teaching training with the school and became a Senior Teacher in November 2022.

So, what next? I'm looking forward to starting my SENCO training in September 2023. Being a SENCO in a school is something I've always been passionate about. When I reflect, I am extremely grateful to be in the position I am now. The school is an amazing place to work.

What I love most about the school is the amazing children that attend. I enjoy the flexibility to adapt any aspect of teaching and learning to help children succeed and the way we put the children's needs and interest first.'





Daniel's Story

When Daniel received a round of applause after delivering training to a room full of colleagues, it confirmed to him more than anything that he was in his dream job.

While he has loved his admin job at Autism East Midlands since joining in March 2019, he has welcomed the opportunity to add trainer to his role this year.

Now in addition to his role as Administration Manager and GDPR Officer for AEM, he's been able to add an extra string to his bow.

"I love my job,"** he said. **"I learn something new every day and I enjoy challenging myself so when I got the opportunity to join the learning and development team to deliver GDPR training, I jumped at the chance."

"I was able to use skills and experience from previous jobs and share that knowledge with colleagues. It's an important topic and turning what some might see as a dry subject into something engaging is really rewarding."

Daniel joined AEM initially as Senior Administrator, where his work included general administration and PA support to the Director of Adult Services and Head of HR. The pandemic changed his job though, as it did others.

While most people worked from home initially, Daniel's role was based in the head office where he covered reception, whilst forming part of a small team responsible for getting PPE out to services. After the pandemic, his role changed again, and he has since been promoted to Administration Manager where he is in a supervisory role.

***"Autism East Midlands has given me plenty of opportunities to learn and to develop my career over the past four years,"** added Daniel.*

"I am neuro diverse and at AEM I've been given every support to develop my strengths. As someone on the autism spectrum, I feel very supported here. From a personal standpoint, I like to be challenged and enjoy learning. But if I should need space, people here understand that and will give me time to gather my thoughts."

He's also been able to draw on his personal experience to help form AEM's Strive group for autistic staff. It provides a forum for autistic employees and helps promote a better understanding of autism within the workplace. The group shares ideas and works on ways to create an environment that is inclusive to all.

Through his involvement with Strive, he has also been able to shape the creation of a social group for autistic adults. Launched last year, Social Autism Space provides safe spaces for autistic adults to socialise with like-minded people, while offering the chance to talk about their experiences.

Daniel now coordinates the group's activities, which includes regular online meetings as well as cinema trips, bowling and walks. It's a group that is constantly evolving and he hopes to see the group grow over time.

*He added: **"I've been given plenty of opportunities to upskill and learn new things. I enjoy combining my new training role with managing the administration team. Some of the team are neuro divergent too and it is really rewarding seeing them come into their own and seeing their confidence grow as they develop new communication and customer service skills. AEM have been supportive to me and I want to share that with others."***

What we want to do in 2023/4

We have big plans for the coming year.

These include opening a **second school** in a new area. We have plans in the pipeline to develop the former fire station in Worksop too and transform it into a day centre. There are also plans to create a skills-share house in Nottingham to offer individuals the chance to learn skills in areas like cooking and gardening to enable them to live more independently.



Thank You

Without the vital support of our funders, donors, and supporters, we wouldn't be able to provide all the services we do for autistic people with autism. Together we're making a difference. Thanks go to ...

- *GXO*
- *Louise Freer*
- *Margaret Kerry*
- *Palterton Residents Association*
- *Rebecca Stansfield*
- *Raffle Dance School*
- *Mrs J. Moore*
- *Ron Palfrey*
- *Orsam Trailers Ltd*
- *Next Plc*
- *Watkinson Care Home*
- *Ora Et Labora Main*
- *Elkesley Craft Club*
- *Caythorpe WI*
- *Gilander Foundation*
- *Much Loved*
- *and the estate of the late Eric Kenneth Marchant*



We are always humbled by the support we receive. Special thanks go to the amazing runners who ran the London Marathon in aid of Autism East Midlands. They all did amazingly well and we're so grateful for their support. These included Carole Botham and Daniel Kneller, pictured here at the end of the Marathon - and still smiling!



Many thanks to logistics company, GXO, and food supplier, Huel, for their kind donation. Five cyclists from the two companies raised more than £400 during a sponsored bike ride. They travelled 50 miles between the GXO building in Wellingborough and the Huel HQ in Tring in just 2 hours and 50 minutes.



The sky was the limit for one of our team, Thomas Mcnulty, who raised more than £1,800 for Autism East Midlands by taking part in a tandem skydive.



Many thanks to the Rehabilitation Walking Football Club in Worksop who generously donated £500 to help us continue supporting autistic people and their families locally.



Thanks also go to Nigel Smith, who was able to donate £330 after completing the Thames Bridges Trek where he walked 25km, criss crossing London's waterways from Putney Bridge to Tower Bridge.



All donations help us to continue supporting autistic people and their families across the region.

Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Reference and administrative details of the company, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees
L Davies *(Deceased 5 May 2022)*
K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan
P Parr
R M Valentine *(resigned 31 December 2022)*
A Bridge *(resigned 16 July 2022)*
R D Levy *(appointed 16 March 2023)*
M J McGuigan *(appointed 16 March 2023)*
S D Barnes *(appointed 23 November 2023)*

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office:
Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate,
Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop,
Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditors:
PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited, Statutory Auditors,
2 Lace Market Square
Nottingham, NG1 1PB

Bankers:
Lloyds Bank Plc
4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the Company for the year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charity's strategic objectives.

In setting objectives and planning for activities, the Trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our vision
A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our mission
To advocate, provide and develop high quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Strategic priorities
Our priorities for the next five years are as follows:

Quality
To ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services by focussing on the following areas:

- Continuing the improvement of the environments within which we work and provide services to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our beneficiaries;
- All of our environments will be designed to minimise restrictions to individuals and maximise their independence;
- By becoming the employer of choice in our field, enabling us to recruit and train staff aligned with our values and skilled in working with autistic people;
- Ensuring the practice in all our services offers purposeful activity enabling individuals we support to maximise their independence in all areas of their lives;
- We will improve our measurement of and focus on person centred services and the delivery of meaningful outcomes for everyone accessing our support; and
- We will understand our performance by utilising our quality assurance matrix informed by our review and audit processes.

Increasing the voice of autistic people
We will ensure that the 'voice' of autistic people (in whatever form that takes) is at the heart of everything we do by enabling people to fully participate in all planning and reviews that pertain to them and/or the service that they access.

By supporting autistic people to play a central role in our organisation, as employees, service users, in our performance management and governance.

We will systematically engage with service users in whatever way is most effective for them. We will use this ongoing dialogue to ensure that the decisions we make, both large and small, are shaped by autistic people.

Evidence based support
We will continue to engage with the wider 'autism community' to ensure that we are engaged with the research agenda.

We will ensure that our delivery and interventions are evidence based – wherever evidence exists.

We will ensure that we keep ourselves informed of innovative practice and adjust our delivery in line with innovation.

We will further develop our digital training and resources and make them available to all staff.

Maximum impact

We will invest in our development of services that support autistic people to access work. We will do so in order to access greater resources, demonstrate models of effective practice and influence the national agenda around employment. We will do so as an organisation and also in partnership with others.

To increase participation of autistic people in paid employment

We will develop employment and employability services that enable autistic people that are new to the organisation to access support and develop opportunities for existing students and service users, including the development of social enterprises, micro social enterprises and self employment opportunities.

We will continue to grow the number of people accessing our support both in number and in geographic spread. This will include opening new or satellite services.

We will develop services that target autistic people with whom our contact is currently minimal and who are often isolated and find it difficult to find services that meet their needs. In particular, we will develop services that offer social opportunities and advice and guidance for adults without a learning disability.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities and key performance indicators
The charity has taken the unusual step this year of paying two pay rises to front line staff within one year to try and combat the difficult recruitment landscape and support staff through last year's difficult winter. The difficulties in recruiting staff had led to excessive agency costs. The second pay rise in December, combined with the high costs of agency have led to a planned loss of £668,088 before other recognised gains/ losses.

Adults Services
The respite service at Whitegates has opened and offers a well-earned break to service users (and families). This beautiful facility has 6 self-contained apartments and over an acre of garden. We were grateful to receive a number of grants to allow us to develop the garden at Whitegates to meet the needs of people in the service.

In January we bought the Old Fire Station in Worksop and we will be turning it into a new day service facility.

Staffing improved after the second pay rise and with the reduction in Covid absence, services started to become more settled as a result.

Children's Services
Sutherland House School continues to develop and support 56 children. We had a record year of attainment in the summer term of 2022 with students achieving 77 accreditations including 7 GCSEs. This comes on the back of the restructure last year and the increased focus on the curriculum. This continues to work well.

Our Family Support Hubs (funded for part of the year by the National Lottery) continued to provide much needed opportunities for families to come together and share their experiences. In Northampton our children's activity programme made the best of the remaining Children in Need funding and had a large variety of activities provided throughout the year.

b. Investment policy and performance
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

c. Factors relevant to achieve objectives
Autism East Midlands aims to increase its support for people whose lives are affected by autism, whether this is for carers or people receiving direct support. We continue to engage with local employers and companies by providing training and awareness of autism to their staff.

Financial Review

For the year ended 31 March 2023

a. Going concern
After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Financial risk management objectives and policies
Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking to make a wide range of cost savings.

c. Principal risks and uncertainties
It is the recruitment and retention of sufficient staff that remains a critical factor for AEM as well as other social care providers. The national shortage of staff means that we are offering increased wage rates to enable the company to compete in attracting and retaining staff.

These annual accounts show the pension deficit as a result of participation in the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is a £2.2m deficit as at 31 March 2023 following an estimated actuarial revaluation. The previous actuarial revaluation showed a deficit of £12.5m which was included in the 2021/22 financial statements. The scheme was closed to new participants from April 2013 to limit the future liability. The way the scheme is funded changed in April 2014, and Autism East Midlands paid £123k in the year (2022: £119k) to contribute towards reducing the deficit in addition to routine contributions.

d. Surplus
A surplus of £9,999,912 (2022: Surplus of £5,001,907) has been achieved in the year. This includes a reduction to restricted funds of £77,646 (2022: £121,349 increase).

Total funds as at 31 March 2023 are in a surplus of £6,827,797 (2022: £3,172,115 deficit), consisting of £153,367 restricted funds (2022: £231,013), £8,857,430 unrestricted funds (2022: £9,113,872) and a pension deficit of £2,183,000 (2022: £12,517,000 deficit).

e. Principal funding
The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

f. Material investments policy
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Group and the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Memorandum of Association.

c. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

d. Pay policy for senior staff

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 25 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in Note 11 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 25.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff, this year whilst most staff received a second pay rise this was not applied to anyone in a management position. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past, a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain high calibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

e. Organisational structure and decision making

During the year under review, the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and non residential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

f. Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

Future developments

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop an additional school in a different county. Having failed to secure a suitable site in the Derby area we are undertaking a review of demand and the best location.

We will develop the old Worksop Fire Station to create a fantastic new day service.

Members' liability

The members of the company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the company in the event of winding up.

Employee involvement and employment of disabled people

Autism East Midlands recognises the GMB Union. Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The company and the group offer exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and has adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees.

The Group and the Company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of personnel matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are under represented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Trustees' Responsibilities
Statement

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

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 Group and the Company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, 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 of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) 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 group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith

Trustee

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant 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 of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Group's or the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve 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 other than the financial statements and our Auditors' 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.

Opinion 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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 Group's and the parent 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 Group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 Auditors' 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. Based on our understanding of the charitable company and industry, we identify the key laws and regulations affecting the charitable company. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identified that the principal risk of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations related to:

- Management bias in respect of accounting estimates and judgements made;
- Management override of control;
- Posting of unusual journals or transactions.

We focused on those areas that could give rise to a material misstatement in the charitable company's financial statements. Our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims, including instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance where available;
- Reviewing legal expenditure in the year to identify instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias. In particular; defined benefit pension liabilities.

It is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 Auditors' Report.

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. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' 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 and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sarah Flear (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of

PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited
Statutory Auditors
2 Lace Market Square
Nottingham
NG1 1PB

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	As Restated Total Funds 2022
	Note	£	£	£	£
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	2	248,620	65,209	313,829	511,890
Charitable activities	4	3,455,931		3,455,931	3,194,043
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	10,513,265		10,513,265	10,333,194
Investments	5	3,971		3,971	100
Other Income	6	67,782	13,590	81,372	147,766
TOTAL INCOME		**14,289,569**	**78,799**	**14,368,368**	**14,186,993**
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	4	10,925,797		10,925,797	8,661,104
Charitable activities	7	3,971,656	139,003	4,110,659	4,873,982
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**14,897,453**	**139,003**	**15,036,456**	**13,535,086**
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME		**(607,884)**	**(60,204)**	**(668,088)**	**651,907**
Transfers between Funds	18	17,442	(17,442)		
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES)		**(590,442)**	**(77,646)**	**(668,088)**	**651,907**
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	24	10,668,000		10,668,000	4,350,000
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**10,077,558**	**(77,646)**	**9,999,912**	**5,001,907**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		(3,403,128)	231,013	(3,172,115)	(8,174,022)
Net movement in funds		10,077,558	(77,646)	9,999,912	5,001,907
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**6,674,430**	**153,367**	**6,827,797**	**(3,172,115)**

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2023

			2023		2022
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,722,147		7,489,036
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	3,267,583		933,511	
Cash at bank and in hand	22	1,123,986		4,125,325	
		4,391,569		**5,058,836**	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,603,590)		(1,557,072)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**2,787,979**		**3,501,764**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**10,510,126**		**10,990,800**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,499,329)		(1,645,915)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			**9,010,797**		**9,344,885**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24		(2,183,000)		(12,517,000)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**6,827,797**		**(3,172,115)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	18		153,367		231,013
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	18	8,857,430		9,113,872	
Pension reserve	18	(2,183,000)		(12,517,000)	
Total unrestricted funds	18		6,674,430		(3,403,128)
TOTAL DEFICIT			**6,827,797**		**(3,172,115)**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 22 to 51 form part of these financial statements.

Company Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2023

			2023		2022
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,722,147		7,489,036
Investments	13		6		6
			7,722,153		7,489,042
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	3,956,690		3,366,939	
Cash at bank and in hand	22	847,242		1,679,260	
		4,803,932		5,046,199	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	**(1,473,973)**		**(1,544,489)**	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**3,329,959**		**3,501,710**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**11,052,112**		**10,990,752**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year			(1,499,329)		(1,645,915)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**9,552,783**		**9,344,837**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24		(2,183,000)		(12,517,000)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**7,369,783**		**(3,172,163)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	18		153,367		231,013
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	18	9,399,416		9,113,824	
Pension reserve	18	(2,183,000)		(12,517,000)	
Total unrestricted funds	18		7,216,416		(3,403,176)
TOTAL FUNDS			**7,369,783**		**(3,172,163)**

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf, by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2023

		2023	2022
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities		(2,332,175)	1,105,607
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		442,817	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,111,981)	(1,462,548)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES		**(669,164)**	**(1,462,548)**
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		**(3,001,339)**	**(356,941)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**4,125,325**	**4,482,266**
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR		1,123,986	4,125,325

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England within the United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is given in the company information of these financial statements. The company's registration number is 02053860.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company.

The significant accounting policies that have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2023 the company generated a surplus of £207,946 prior to actuarial gains/losses (2022: £1,050,907 surplus).

1.3 Company status

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the Company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Company has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Company, can be reliably measured.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset class and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Company's accounting policies.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Company which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.7 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable activities are costs incurred by the company in the delivery of its activities undertaken to further the purposes of the company, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

At each reporting date the company assesses whether there is any indication of impairment. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined to be the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases.

Freehold property	-	2% Straight Line
Freehold refurbishment	-	5% 33% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	35% 100% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulations are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.9 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance Sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities.

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.10 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.11 Taxation

The Company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.13 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.14 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.15 Government grants

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance- related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

1.16 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the Trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

The pension charge for the defined benefit pension scheme is based on a full actuarial valuation dated 31 March 2023.

1.18 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	£	£	*£*
Donations	48,620	65,209	**113,829**	*511,890*
Property legacy	200,000		**200,000**	
	248,620	65,209	**313,829**	*511,890*
Total 2022	*263,854*	*248,036*	*511,890*	

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of results pre-distribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £129,502 (2022: £754,041). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £Nil (2022: £918,049).

		Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
		£	£	*£*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income		4,599,566	**4,599,566**	*4,693,714*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income		5,913,699	**5,913,699**	*5,639,480*
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses		(4,470,064)	**(4,470,064)**	*(3,939,673)*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses		(6,455,733)	**(6,455,733)**	*(4,721,431)*
Net income from subsidiary undertakings		**(412,532)**	**(412,532)**	*1,672,090*

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
		£	£	*£*
Provision of services		3,455,931	**3,455,931**	*3,194,043*
Total 2022 as restated		*3,194,043*	*3,194,043*	

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

		Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
		£	£	*£*
Bank interest		3,971	**3,971**	*100*
Total 2022		*100*	*100*	

6. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	£	£	*£*
Other income	67,782		**67,782**	*44,961*
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme				*8,029*
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund		13,590	**13,590**	*84,943*
Coronavirus Infection Control and Testing Fund				*9,833*
	67,782	*13,590*	**81,372**	*147,766*
Total 2022	*52,990*	*94,776*	*147,766*	

7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	3,971,656	139,003	**4,110,659**	*4,806,022*
Fundraising				*67,960*
	3,971,656	139,003	**4,110,659**	*4,873,982*
Total 2022 as restated	*4,658,519*	*215,463*	*4,873,982*	

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2023	Support costs 2023	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	2,234,524	1,876,135	**4,110,659**	*4,806,022*
Fundraising				*67,960*
	2,234,524	1,876,135	**4,110,659**	*4,873,982*
Total 2022 as restated	*2,397,119*	*2,476,863*	*4,873,982*	

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	*£*
Staff costs	**8,304,356**	*8,240,140*
Agency costs	**2,204,848**	*964,267*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	**(8,274,680)**	*(6,807,288)*
	2,234,524	*2,397,119*

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2023	*Total funds 2022*
	£	*£*
Staff costs	**1,114,848**	*1,470,104*
Depreciation	**581,805**	*548,527*
Other staff costs	**155,417**	*143,628*
Premises costs	**907,068**	*868,217*
IT costs	**362,346**	*307,507*
Legal & professional costs	**226,219**	*140,042*
Insurance costs	**207,407**	*164,737*
Travel costs	**192,660**	*176,442*
Other support costs	**483,293**	*333,229*
Office costs	**85,536**	*106,793*
Governance costs	**25,003**	*27,854*
Marketing costs	**21,686**	*6,128*
Catering cost	**163,073**	*151,774*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	**(2,650,226)**	*(1,968,119)*
Total	**1,876,135**	*2,476,863*

9. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor for the audit of the Group's annual accounts	20,300	*17,305*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor in respect of:		
All taxation services not included above	1,350	*1,035*

10. STAFF COSTS

	Group 2023	*Group 2022*	Company 2023	*Company 2022*
	£	*£*	£	*£*
Wages and salaries	**7,759,928**	*8,044,087*	**7,759,928**	*8,044,087*
Social security costs	**702,262**	*641,207*	**702,262**	*641,207*
Other pension costs (Note 23)	**719,014**	*709,950*	**719,014**	*709,950*
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	**238,000**	*315,000*	**238,000**	*315,000*
	9,419,204	*9,710,244*	**9,419,204**	*9,710,244*

The average number of persons employed by the Group and Company during the year was as follows:

	Group and Company 2023	*Group and Company 2022*
	No.	*No.*
Teaching staff	**104**	*105*
Care staff	**231**	*297*
Management and Administration	**34**	*30*
	369	*432*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2023	*Group 2022*
	No.	*No.*
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	**1**	*1*
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	**1**	*2*
In the band £100,001 - £200,000	**1**	*1*

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2022 £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2023, expenses totalling £659 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2022 - £474 to 1 Trustee).

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group and Company

	Freehold property and refurbs	Vehicles & equipment	Assets under construction	Leasehold improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1 April 2022	9,500,734	1,008,739	572,019	257,448	11,338,940
Additions	1,075,185	36,796			1,111,981
Disposals	(392,927)				(392,927)
Transfers between classes	572,019		(572,019)		
At 31 March 2023	10,755,011	1,045,535		257,448	12,057,994
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2022	2,885,138	707,318		257,448	3,849,904
Charge for the year	433,511	148,294			581,805
On disposals	(108,067)				(108,067)
Impairment charge	12,205				12,205
At 31 March 2023	3,222,787	855,612		257,448	4,335,847
Net book value					
At 31 March 2023	7,532,224	189,923			7,722,147
At 31 March 2022	*6,615,596*	*301,421*	*572,019*		*7,489,036*

13. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Investments in subsidiary companies
Company	**£**
Cost and NBV	
At 1 April 2022	6
At 31 March 2023	6

Principal Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

Company	Company number	Basis of control	Holding
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	08056114	Equity share capital	100%
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	03381476	Equity share capital	100%

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

Company	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit for the year £	Net assets £
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	5,913,699	(6,455,733)	(542,034)	3
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	4,599,566	(4,470,064)	129,502	51

14. DEBTORS

	Group	*Group*	Company	*Company*
	2023	*2022*	**2023**	*2022*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**2,668,622**	*817,168*	**742,083**	*355,454*
Amounts owed by group undertakings			**2,856,597**	*2,895,142*
Other debtors	**12,641**	*53,906*	**12,641**	*53,906*
Prepayments and accrued income	**586,320**	*62,437*	**345,369**	*62,437*
	3,267,583	*933,511*	**3,956,690**	*3,366,939*

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2023	*2022*	**2023**	*2022*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Bank loans	**142,185**	*138,274*	**142,185**	*138,274*
Trade creditors	**565,336**		**449,459**	
Other taxation and social security	**486,793**	*486,023*	**486,793**	*486,023*
Other creditors	**82,201**	*87,222*	**82,201**	*87,222*
Accruals and deferred income	**327,075**	*845,553*	**313,335**	*832,970*
	1,603,590	*1,557,072*	**1,473,973**	*1,544,489*

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2023	*2022*	**2023**	*2022*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Bank loans	**1,499,329**	*1,645,915*	**1,499,329**	*1,645,915*

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

		Group		Company
	2023	*2022*	**2023**	*2022*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Between one and two years				
Bank loans	**146,450**	*142,185*	**146,450**	*142,185*
Between two and five years				
Bank loans	**465,393**	*452,282*	**465,393**	*452,282*
Over five years				
Bank loans	**887,486**	*1,051,448*	**887,486**	*1,051,448*

The aggregate amount of liabilities payable or repayable wholly or in part more than five years after the reporting date is:

		Group		Company
	2023	*2022*	**2023**	*2022*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Repayable by instalments	**887,486**	*1,051,448*	**887,486**	*1,051,448*

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% and repayments are repayable monthly.

17. PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENT

A classification error was identified in the prior year figures between income from charitable activities and expenditure on charitable activities, resulting in income and costs being overstated by £902,930.

This has been restated in the current year resulting in updated 2022 total income from charitable activities of £3,194,043 and total expenditure on charitable activities of £4,873,982.

18. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 20232
	£	£	£	£	£	£
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Fund	9,113,824	3,776,304	(3,637,656)	146,944		9,399,416
Reserves - subsidiaries	48	10,513,265	(10,925,797)	(129,502)		(541,986)
Pension reserve	(12,517,000)		(334,000)		10,668,000	(2,183,000)
	(3,403,128)	**14,289,569**	**(14,897,453)**	**17,442**	**10,668,000**	**6,674,430**
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7,377		(435)			6,942
Jones Trust - Science Lab	17,498			3,489		20,987
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	37,500					37,500
Wilson Foundation	9,470		(5,536)			3,934
National Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	63,137		(63,137)			
Children in Need	17,839	36,709	(42,828)	(11,720)		
BNA Charitable Organisation	75,000		(4,735)	(6,625)		63,640
Old Heanorians	3,192		(626)			2,566
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund		13,590	(13,590)			
The Lady Hind Trust		2,500				2,500
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust		25,000	(8,116)	(2,586)		14,298
John Eastwood Foundation		1,000				1,000
	231,013	78,799	(139,003)	(17,442)		153,367
Total of funds	**(3,172,115)**	**14,368,368**	**(15,036,456)**		**10,668,000**	**6,827,797**

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a program to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The National Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation - this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Jones Trust - Science Lab represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school. The donation has been fully spent but the income is being released to the Statement of Financial Activities in line with the depreciation charged on the assets acquired.

Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for autistic individuals in crisis. This project is ongoing with the funds due to be spent in the coming year.

Children in Need - Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton - a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

BNA Charitable Organisation - Funding received from the BNA Charitable Organisation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis. This project is ongoing with the funds due to be spent in the coming year.

Old Heanorians - This funding received from Old Heanorians is to support the Heanor Family Support Hub.

The Lady Hind Trust - Funding received from The Lady Hind Trust contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust - Funding received from Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust contributes towards the redevelopment of the school courtyard and garden at Sutherland House School. The Donation has been fully spent but the income is being released to the Statement of Financial Activities in line with the depreciation charged on the assets acquired.

John Eastwood Foundation - Funding received from John Eastwood Foundation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2021	*Income*	*Expenditure*	*Transfers in /out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2022*
	£	*£*	*£*	*£*	*£*	*£*
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Fund	*8,184,266*	*4,413,917*	*(5,162,449)*	*1,678,090*		*9,113,824*
Reserves - subsidiaries	*48*	*10,333,194*	*(8,661,104)*	*(1,672,090)*		*48*
Pension reserve	*(16,468,000)*		*(399,000)*		*4,350,000*	*(12,517,000)*
	(8,283,686)	***14,747,111***	***(14,222,553)***	***6,000***	***4,350,000***	***(3,403,128)***
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	*7,698*		*(321)*			*7,377*
Jones Trust	*23,498*	*37,500*		*(6,000)*		*54,998*
Wilson Foundation	*16,000*		*(6,530)*			*9,470*
Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	*55,085*	*88,285*	*(80,233)*			*63,137*
Children in Need	*4,488*	*35,581*	*(22,230)*			*17,839*
Building Better Opportunities	*2,895*	*5,438*	*(8,333)*			
Duke of Edinburgh		*3,040*	*(3,040)*			
BNA Charitable Organisation		*75,000*				*75,000*
Old Heanorians		*3,192*				*3,192*
Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund		*84,943*	*(84,943)*			
Infection Control Fund		*9,833*	*(9,833)*			
	109,664	***342,812***	***(215,463)***	***(6,000)***		***231,013***
Total of funds	***(8,174,022)***	***15,089,923***	***(14,438,016)***		***4,350,000***	***(3,172,115)***

19. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	(3,403,128)	14,289,569	(14,897,453)	17,442	10,668,000	6,674,430
Restricted funds	231,013	78,799	(139,003)	(17,442)		153,367
	(3,172,115)	**14,368,368**	**(15,036,456)**		**10,668,000**	**6,827,797**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2021	*Income*	*Expenditure*	*Transfers in/ out*	*Gains/ (Losses)*	*Balance at 31 March 2022*
	£	*£*	*£*	*£*	*£*	*£*
General Funds	*(8,283,686)*	*14,747,111*	*(14,222,553)*	*6,000*	*4,350,000*	*(3,403,128)*
Restricted funds	*109,664*	*342,812*	*(215,463)*	*(6,000)*		*231,013*
	(8,174,022)	***15,089,923***	***(14,438,016)***		***4,350,000***	***(3,172,115)***

20. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	7,664,646	57,501	7,722,147
Current assets	4,295,703	95,866	4,391,569
Creditors due within one year	(1,603,590)		(1,603,590)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,499,329)		(1,499,329)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(2,183,000)		(2,183,000)
Total	**6,674,430**	**153,367**	**6,827,797**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2022	*Restricted funds 2022*	*Total funds 2022*
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	7,434,038	54,998	7,489,036
Current assets	4,882,821	176,015	5,058,836
Creditors due within one year	(1,557,072)		(1,557,072)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,645,915)		(1,645,915)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(12,517,000)		(12,517,000)
Total	**(3,403,128)**	**231,013**	**(3,172,115)**

21. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Group	*Group*
	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**(668,088)**	*651,907*
ADJUSTMENT FOR:		
Depreciation charges	**581,805**	*548,526*
Impairment of property valuation	**12,205**	*101,515*
Profit on the sale of fixed assets	**(157,957)**	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	**(2,334,072)**	*(411,942)*
Decrease in creditors	**(100,068)**	*(183,399)*
FRS102 pension adjustments	**334,000**	*399,000*
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**(2,332,175)**	*1,105,607*

22. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	Group	*Group*
	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Cash in hand	**1,123,986**	*4,125,325*
TOTAL	**1,123,986**	*4,125,325*

The company cash balances consist of £847,242 cash in hand (2022: £1,679,260 cash in hand).

23. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2022	Cash flows	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	4,125,325	(3,001,339)	1,123,986
Debt due within 1 year	(138,274)	(3,911)	(142,185)
Debt due after 1 year	(1,645,915)	146,586	(1,499,329)
	2,341,136	**(2,858,664)**	**(517,528)**

24. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Group operates a defined benefit pension scheme.

Retirement benefits to employees of the Group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee- administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 March 2023 was £269,000 (2022:

£291,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £235,000 (2022: £254,000) and employees' contributions totalled £34,000 (2022: £37,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.3% for employers and 12.5% for employees.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	At 31 March 2023	*At 31 March 2022*
	%	%
Discount rate at 31 March	**4.8**	*2.6*
Future salary increases	**2.95**	*3.2*
Future pension increases	**2.95**	*3.2*

24. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

	At 31 March 2023	*At 31 March 2022*
	Years	*Years*
Mortality rates (in years)		
for a male aged 65 now	**20.7**	*21*
at 65 for a male aged 45 now	**22**	*22.3*
for a female aged 65 now	**23.5**	*23.8*
at 65 for a female aged 45 now	**25**	*25.2*

Sensitivity analysis (applied to gross defined benefit liability)

	At 31 March 2023	*At 31 March 2022*
	£	*£*
Discount rate +0.1%	**22,945,000**	*33,679,000*
Discount rate -0.1%	**23,704,000**	*35,156,000*
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	**24,117,000**	*35,914,000*
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	**22,551,000**	*32,968,000*
Pension increase rate +0.1%	**23,698,000**	*35,114,000*
Pension decrease rate -0.1%	**22,951,000**	*33,718,000*

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	Fair value at 31 March 2023	*Fair value at 31 March 2022*
	£	*£*
Equities	**13,105,000**	*13,262,000*
Gilts	**437,000**	*645,000*
Other bonds	**1,252,000**	*1,493,000*
Property	**2,509,000**	*2,813,000*
Cash/ temporary investments	**1,106,000**	*1,225,000*
Inflation Plus	**1,067,000**	*1,153,000*
Infrastructure	**1,661,000**	*1,301,000*
Total market value of assets	**21,137,000**	*21,892,000*

The actual return on scheme assets was a loss of £454,000 (2022 - £1,857,000 gain).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Current service cost	**238,000**	*315,000*
Interest on obligation	**322,000**	*327,000*
Administrative expenses	**9,000**	*11,000*
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	**569,000**	*653,000*

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Opening defined benefit obligation	**34,409,000**	*36,830,000*
Current service cost	**238,000**	*315,000*
Contributions by scheme participants	**34,000**	*37,000*
Actuarial gains	**(11,618,000)**	*(2,897,000)*
Benefits paid	**(630,000)**	*(607,000)*
Interest cost	**887,000**	*731,000*
Closing defined benefit obligation	**23,320,000**	*34,409,000*

Movements in the fair value of the Group's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Opening fair value of scheme assets	**21,892,000**	*20,362,000*
Interest income	**565,000**	*404,000*
Actuarial (losses)/gains	**(950,000)**	*1,453,000*
Administrative expenses	**(9,000)**	*(11,000)*
Contributions by employer	**235,000**	*254,000*
Contributions by scheme participants	**34,000**	*37,000*
Benefits paid	**(630,000)**	*(607,000)*
Closing fair value of scheme assets	**21,137,000**	*21,892,000*

25. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2023 the Group and the Company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2023	*2022*
	£	*£*
Not later than 1 year	**142,010**	*133,804*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**78,417**	*173,209*
	220,427	*307,013*

26. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Neither the Charity or its subsidiary undertakings have entered into any related party transactions during the year which require disclosure under FRS 102, nor are there any outstanding balances owing between related parties and the Company at 31 March 2023.

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, Finance Director and Headteacher. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £390,115 (2022 - £398,576) for short term employment benefits and £29,387 (2022 - £28,396) for post-employment benefits.



Our achievements over the past year have been the result of the work of our dedicated staff, combined with the significant support of all our partners. If you would like to get involved in our work, we would love to hear from you.

This information can be provided in a more accessible format by contacting **enquiries@aem.org.uk**

AEM Autism East Midlands

For more information...
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T 01909 506 678
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Autism East Midlands

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Registered charity no. 517954
Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England no. 2053860

AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales - Charity number 517954

Accounts

Annual Review
2021 - 2022

AEM
Autism East Midlands



Welcome

The last year started while still under the challenges that the pandemic presented but ended on a real high. Our services continued to develop as restrictions around Covid gradually lifted. Meanwhile, work took place to develop a new respite service.

We rounded off the year with an Excellence in Inclusion award from the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce in recognition for our approach to diversity and inclusion. Over the following pages you'll read about our past year and how our services continued to develop.



"The Senior Team is hugely grateful to frontline staff and managers for their commitment to the people we support ..."



George Smith: Chair of Trustees

As I sat down to write my introduction to this 2021/2022 Annual Review, I reflected on the previous year's turmoil and the impact of Covid.

Although Covid restrictions have eased, we are acutely aware of its continuing presence and the need for relevant precautions.

I wrote briefly, previously, on the impact that Covid had had on our services. While this continued throughout 2021, the impact eased as the restrictions eased.

I am immensely proud that we have been able to maintain all our existing services and, in the case of day provision, restore them to in service provision. We have even been able to carry out improvements to our building stock to ensure that services continue to occupy buildings fit for purpose.

I have absolutely no doubt that all this would not have been possible without the support of our exemplary staff at all levels within the organisation. They have bent over backwards to ensure that our service users have received the care and attention that they thoroughly deserve.

My gratitude goes to all Autism East Midlands employees, and to my fellow Trustees for their continuing support throughout a challenging year.

Jane Howson: Chief Executive Officer

The last year has been another tumultuous year. We had more rounds of lockdowns and restrictions to navigate and our frontline staff were subject to twice weekly testing and continued wearing of PPE.

We didn't see the bounce in recruitment anticipated at the end of the pandemic and, along with most other employers, we find ourselves facing ongoing staff shortages.

Despite this, staff continued to give it their all and, despite some very high levels of Covid absence at times, kept the show on the road. The Senior Team is hugely grateful to frontline staff and managers for their commitment to the people we support.

We opened a new supported living service in Northampton, re-opened our Family Support Services face to face, and our Employment Team helped many autistic people find a job, some for the first time. Students returned to school, day services built back up again and the people we support tentatively reengaged in their communities.

We rounded off the year in the best way as we received an Excellence in Inclusion award from the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce in recognition for our approach to diversity and inclusion.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Highlights of our year included:

HIGHLIGHTS

As the restrictions of Covid began to ease our service users were able to return to doing some of the activities they had missed. Service users at our Bolsover service, for example, were able to return to their favourite activities.

*For **Lee** trips out to the cinema on a Sunday morning and going to the hydro pool were back on the agenda. Another thing which Lee has missed out on was not being able to get out and do his own shopping and he was very happy to return to doing that again.*



Our year in **numbers**

59

PEOPLE SUPPORTED THROUGH REGISTERED RESIDENTIAL SERVICES.

139

PEOPLE SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT DAY SERVICES.

506

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESSED OUR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SERVICE.



HIGHLIGHTS

After restrictions started lifting, our Hamilton service reintroduced activities again. Service users had talked about wanting to do the day trips they had enjoyed in previous years that they had missed over the Covid period. A series of trips were planned around their special interests including a trip to Crich Railway Museum, the dinosaur exhibition at Wollaton Park, and a trip to Cleethorpes. Service users got involved with planning where to go, how much it was going to cost and the route to take on the bus.

200

HOURS OF ACTIVITIES WERE ORGANISED BY THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SERVICE INCLUDING 9 YOUTH CLUBS AND 12 HOLIDAY CLUBS.

36

ONLINE ACTIVITIES WERE ORGANISED FROM BAKING WORKSHOPS TO GAMING SESSIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

76

HOURS OF ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY THE FAMILY SUPPORT HUBS.

3

SUTHERLAND HOUSE SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPLETED SILVER DUKE OF EDINBURGH WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES.



HIGHLIGHTS

Our Family Support Hub in Loughborough organised forest schools where fire lighting, den building, wand making, stick painting, and bug hunting were just some of the activities that took place.



HIGHLIGHTS

After the lockdown we enjoyed our first family get together at The Poplars, where all families arrived at allocated times and were able to enjoy a special afternoon tea in a safe setting.

4

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITS WERE CARRIED OUT AT REGIONAL RAILWAY STATIONS.

129

FAMILIES TOOK PART IN FAMILY SUPPORT HUB SESSIONS.



60

STUDENTS WERE ON THE ROLL AT SUTHERLAND HOUSE SCHOOL THIS YEAR.

22

SCHOOL STUDENTS PASSED LIFE AND LIVING SKILLS COURSES, WHICH INCLUDED ARTS AND CRAFTS, HEALTHY LIVING AND MATHS.



24

INDUCTION COURSES WERE HELD AND ATTENDED BY 223 EMPLOYEES.



HIGHLIGHTS

A new supported living service opened in Northamptonshire. This purpose-built scheme was developed in partnership with the local authority in Northamptonshire and NHS England and built by Northampton Partnership Homes. The four sets of two semi-detached bungalows provide care and support to eight individuals.

MORE THAN 90 AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS WERE SUPPORTED BY OUR EMPLOYMENT TEAM.

HIGHLIGHTS

Many of our services, including those in Worksop, took to gardening during lockdown. Over the summer our service users continued to grow vegetables and reaped the rewards of their hard work.

583

PEOPLE ATTENDED OUR TRAINING COURSES.

During healthy eating week, students at Sutherland House School studied the artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Inspired by his work, our students created their own portraits using fruits and vegetables as well as investigating and identifying objects within his work.

"Thank you - you don't realise what a blessing all these sessions are for us. After a dreadfully trying 16 months thanks to Covid, having these clubs as respite care is an absolute God send for us."
Parent, whose daughter was able to return to the youth clubs again.

As soon as restrictions lifted we were able to provide environmental audits again. We were invited to visit various businesses to help them identify areas that could be a challenge to autistic individuals. Joined by some of our service users, we were able to examine areas and recommend practical solutions. One of the first places we visited was Nottingham Castle. Fresh from its £30m revamp, the visitor attraction asked us to go along to review their site to ensure it met the needs of autistic visitors.





25

AUTISTIC PEOPLE WERE SUPPORTED INTO PAID OR VOLUNTARY EMPLOYMENT.

HIGHLIGHTS

Our Children and Young People's Service organised outdoor pursuits including a trip to Rutland Water Reserve for some exploring, kayaking, raft building and paddle boarding. Other activities ranged from trips to a llama trekking farm, an escape room, and climbing wall adventure centre, among many other venues.

HIGHLIGHTS

Sutherland House School student, Kieran, likes horses and so loved it when he got the chance to spend time at Nottingham's Broadview Riding School. He went on to return to the stables and gained valuable work experience. He was able to learn more about the stables and proved to be a great worker as he enjoyed sweeping and clearing the stables and grooming and caring for the horses.



8 SUTHERLAND HOUSE SCHOOL STUDENTS PASSED THEIR DUKE OF EDINBURGH BRONZE AWARD SECTIONAL CERTIFICATES AND

4 COMPLETED THEIR DUKE OF EDINBURGH SILVER AWARD.



HIGHLIGHTS

Ideagen Plc presented Sutherland House School with a generous donation of laptops for our students to use.

"The team make every effort to engage the children by watching and remembering what they are interested in and encouraging them to play, which enables parents to chat, share stories and experiences. We think the service is wonderful!"
A parent of a child supported by AEM's Children and Young People's Service

Feel Good Fridays have become a firm favourite at Sutherland House School. Students enjoy taking part in wellbeing and mindfulness sessions that include yoga and relaxation to round off the week.

Quality

We will always ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services.

Oak Tree Rise
transforming lives

Here at Autism East Midlands, we pride ourselves on providing professional support that addresses the needs of individuals, builds trust with carers, and enables the enjoyment of meaningful lives.

In late 2020, we got the opportunity to take part in shaping an innovative development; a new, purpose-built supported living service in Northamptonshire. The following year Oak Tree Rise opened its doors for the first time, offering support to eight individuals with autism, learning disabilities and highly complex needs.

They were each either transitioning from out of county secure hospitals, or whose current placements were at risk of breaking down. We worked in close partnership with a local housing association to offer intensive staff support within self-contained accommodation.

Assessments took place in the months leading up to its launch, and these were carried out with involvement from both operational managers and our in-house clinical team.

Developing a new service in the middle of a global pandemic presented a huge challenge. However, the efforts have been worthwhile as Oak Tree Rise has genuinely transformed the lives of the service users who live there, and who have exceptionally complex needs.

"As a values-led organisation, we're proud of the work we have carried out at Oak Tree Rise and in the contributions we have made to enabling autistic individuals with highly complex needs to live fulfilling, enjoyable lives. Understanding the complexities of our service users, and providing person-centred support, underpinned by evidence-based practice, is the best way forward."

Louise Haggar, Consultant Clinical Psychologist / Lead Psychologist Adult Services

Success stories include:

Leo*
(*not his real name)

After time spent in secure hospital care, Leo was moved to a residential care service. It was far from his family though and they faced a 300-mile round trip to visit him. He had difficulties managing anger and frustration and this wasn't helped by being so far from his family. Meanwhile, he had little in the way of meaningful activity to fill his days and he had difficulties with trust and very poor self-esteem.

Our team planned a structured period of transitional work, which involved support staff travelling to his current service so that they could get to know each other. Since moving into his flat, he's celebrated his 21st birthday and gained the role of service groundsman. This has not only helped to boost his confidence but also prepared him for future work opportunities.

By understanding some of the factors that were contributing to his frustration and angry outbursts, the team has also been able to support him to develop strategies to manage his emotions. It means he is able to live a much more fulfilling life.

David*
(*not his real name)

**David had spent nearly all his life in secure or restrictive environments before moving into his new flat at Oak Tree Rise. He was placed in care as a baby following abuse and neglect in his family home and this continued in one of the residential schools he was moved to, which later closed down.*

Early trauma and neglect had a huge effect on his self-worth, and he had developed behaviours of concern, which placed both him and others at risk of harm. He was resident in a secure hospital when referred to AEM, and the team carried out a period of transition where they spent time getting to know him.

**David has no family, so is entirely dependent on professional support. Consistent, compassionate and patient staff who understand the impact of his life experiences to date have been absolutely key. He has started to trust familiar staff and feel safe enough to spend time with them and he is gradually accepting that he is valued. The team take pleasure in seeing the positive changes in *David and seeing him take part in everyday activities that we all take for granted such as a new haircut.*







Voice

We will always put in place systems to ensure that the voice of autistic people is at the heart of everything we do.

This comes from our service users and students through our Voice forums to the newly formed STRIVE group.

STRIVE was formed in 2021 to act as a 'voice' for the autistic community in the workplace.

The group was set up specially to work with autistic employees across the organisation and look at ways to improve and encourage the best support for staff in the workplace.

"As someone newly diagnosed, I found the group supportive in helping me to understand how my autism impacts my work. The group allowed me to be myself and reduced the 'masking' of my autistic traits allowing me to understand my own autism and excel in my role."

Its name came from a group discussion. Members decided it was fitting to call it STRIVE as they wanted to strive to create best practice in the workplace.

During the year they met every two months with the aim of helping to make the work environment more inclusive for people on the autism spectrum. Their meetings provided a place for members of the group to share experiences and talk about areas that might affect autistic people in the workplace.

"The group gave me a space to share ideas with like-minded people and to gain support."

Looking beyond AEM, members of STRIVE have also played a part in the development of a project to create a social space for autistic adults.

It was recognised that there was a need for facilities to offer autistic adults with the chance to take part in social activities. External adviser and partner, Hannah Harris came along to one of the STRIVE meetings to talk to the group. Members shared their experiences, offered feedback and have taken an active role in the creation of this much needed group.

As we go to print, the project is progressing. An update will appear in next year's Annual Review. We'll also follow its progress on our website **www.aem.org.uk.**

CASE STUDY

People are at the heart of all we do. Our services hold regular Service User Voice meetings to ensure everyone has their views heard. It was at one of the meetings at our Sherwood Day Centre that the suggestion was made for a crazy golf course.

It was constructed by staff with service users, Ben and James, during a woodwork session. Everyone has enjoyed using it so much that sessions were arranged at the driving range at Sutton in Ashfield and proved so popular they now take place monthly.

"Building was good with Andy. I enjoyed it. It's really good to play and good fun."
James

"The building of the course went very well, we did it as part of the woodwork session. It is good fun using it, we use the score cards, play 8 holes going around twice."
Ben



"**STRIVE** is all about promoting a better understanding of autism within the workplace. We want to make sure that the right support is there for staff who are autistic. Our aim is to improve communication between autistic and non-autistic staff. We want to create an environment that is inclusive to all."
Ben Brown, Nominated Chair of STRIVE

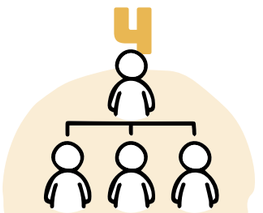




MEETINGS TOOK PLACE



AUTISTIC EMPLOYEES EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE GROUP



MEMBERS RECEIVED SUPPORT THROUGH THE GROUP IN THE WORKPLACE

STRIVE

This is only the start for STRIVE.... The group has big plans to develop its role over the coming year. Plans are already in place to look at ways of improving communications across the organisation to help create a better understanding between autistic and non-autistic staff.

The group aims to create a positive environment for all staff while meeting the sensory needs of our autistic staff. They will be highlighting the benefits of the group and extending their reach across the organisation. This includes plans to produce a newsletter to staff between the two monthly meetings.

Evidence Based Support

We will always continue to engage with the wider autism community, within the East Midlands, but also nationally.

When service users have challenging behaviours it can often stop them from living life to the full and accessing activities within the community.

We believe all behaviours have meaning. Our staff work closely with our clinical team to understand why individuals behave in ways that may be harmful to themselves or others. Together we find ways to help them improve their quality of life.

Here's how the right support helped *Michael

*A man in his late 20s, *Michael is autistic with intellectual disabilities and communication difficulties. He's a very sociable man with a great sense of humour.*

He came to stay temporarily at our Worksop service after experiencing a crisis in his home situation. It was soon clear though that he felt at home and so his stay was extended.

When he began to engage in some challenging behaviours, the Clinical Team explored triggers to these and found that MP was struggling to communicate his preferences to supporting staff. Not surprisingly, he was finding this very frustrating. Further assessment of his communication highlighted how much he enjoys using technology, so he was given an iPad to help him communicate. He's now able to use it to make choices around activities, which gives him a greater sense of independence.

His delight in being able to communicate better is clear not only by his trademark huge grin and enthusiasm, but also in a huge reduction in behaviours of concern.

"All your hard work organising these things is very much appreciated. It's lovely for my son to have some social activities like this as he doesn't have friends or socialise at school or anything. An evening activity like this makes him feel a little more like other teenagers. Thank you!"
A mum, whose son attends our Children and Young People's Service



The pandemic had a long-term effect on so many people nationally. At our Mundy Street Day Centre in Heanor one gentleman had not left the centre for upwards of two years. The staff team worked together during 2021 and he is now going out nearly every day and is really enjoying going to local parks and walks.

Maximum Impact

We will always ensure the maximum impact of our services.

During the year the Employment Team concentrated on delivering the Well for Work programme across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, part funded by the European Social Fund.

More than 90 autistic clients were supported from areas as far afield as the High Peaks in Derbyshire to south Nottinghamshire.

The team supported 24 people into employment within a wide range of sectors, ranging from care to warehousing and digital media.

In addition, others were able to develop skills in job search techniques and CV compilation, gain work experience placements or volunteering opportunities. Some achieved basic skills qualifications in maths and English and completed digital skills bootcamp courses.

Particular highlights include clients who have entered employment within AEM. One gained an administration position at Head Office and two secured roles as autism practitioner/support workers in our Nottingham day centre.

"In the past, I had started to give up and think that there wasn't a job that I could do with my needs. Since then, my AEM coach has told me about jobs I'd never even thought of before and has helped me with things that I really struggle with - such as contacting employers and dealing with paperwork. The opportunity she found for me at the hospital has given me a lot of hope. Things seem to be progressing well, and I'm very happy that I was referred to the service."
Alasdair, a participant in our employment services support programme



The year was rounded off with an Excellence in Inclusion award from the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce in recognition for our approach to diversity and inclusion.

Our Autism Forward programme, funded by the Autism Forward Charity, has complemented the Well for Work delivery by supporting clients predominately as an on-line service across the wider East Midlands area. With a smaller caseload Autism Forward has had 20 clients, with six gaining employment in the last 12 months. This service is something we intend to develop further.

We will continue making links with employers, arranging work experience placements and supporting reasonable adjustments in the workplace for clients. The last 12 months has seen an increased network of referral routes and support agencies and we look forward to developing new partnerships in order to access new service providers in order to achieve our outcomes of employment, training, education and wellbeing.

A further exciting phase for the future will include investigating and developing options for social enterprise vehicles which will provide social outcomes in the form of placements and training with qualifications, with the potential for new job creation as the enterprises grow.

CASE STUDY

"Before being referred to Autism East Midlands, I was struggling repeatedly with job searching and finding employment, becoming frustrated with my situation. When I began working with my work coach at AEM on these challenges, I found I was quickly making progress in those areas and was receiving help more suitable to the difficulties unique to my autism.

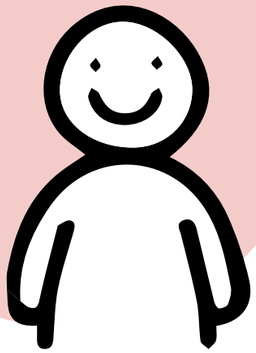
My coach was both friendly and encouraging in her work and made the process more hopeful than previous job seeking efforts had ever been. An administration position at AEM became available and my coach encouraged me to apply. Happily, I was successful in my application for the role.

Since starting with AEM as an admin officer, I've found myself integrating very quickly into the company. I get on well with my fellow staff at head office. I can work productively on all the tasks I am allocated and work within a structure that suits me. I'm finding myself more outwardly confident in speaking with colleagues and members of the public and in the work that I do. It has been a great benefit to me as a person to have found a place here in AEM as I have done."

Aaron Fairburn, Admin Officer at Autism East Midlands



"We are a global agri-food manufacturer with a positive attitude towards supporting those at risk of social exclusion. Our Worksop site has developed a relationship with Autism East Midlands which has flourished due to their positive ability to candidate-match their client's needs to ours. They've also ensured suitable and ongoing encouragement is in situ for the employer and client post placement. We have benefited tremendously from the support offered by Autism East Midlands which has enabled us to fulfil a functional gap in our recruitment strategy, helping us progress further in embracing diversity."
Deborah Stephenson, Human Resources Officer, at Cerealto Siro, Worksop



Thank You!

Without the vital support of our funders, donors, and supporters, we wouldn't be able to provide all the services we do for people with autism. Together we're making a difference. Particular thanks go to ...

Addooco Ltd, Chesterfield

Arnold Clark Automobiles

ASGS Security Services

AW Lymn Funeral Directors

Badby United Reform Church

Charities Trust

J Parry Evans

Mazars Charitable Trust

Next Plc

Prov Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire Charity

Thoresby Charity

The Grey Trust

Masonic Charitable Foundation

We also received separate legacies from the estates of **Mr Strutt** and **Mr Butler**.



We are always humbled by the support we receive and in September were delighted to receive a donation of **£130** by young **Grace**, who lives near our Head Office. She was keen to support an autism charity, in recognition of a family member who has been diagnosed with the condition. She donated £130, which she has raised during a cake bake and sale.

And we are constantly amazed by the people who carry out fundraising challenges for us. These include nine runners, who took on both the **Robin Hood** and **Sheffield Half Marathons** in support of AEM and raised over **£2,100**.

There were also 11 amazing supporters, who took on the Peak District Ultra Challenge - running and walking distances from 25k to 100k over 26 hours to raise more than **£5,200** for AEM.

Nottinghamshire photographer, **Lamar Francois** also helped to raise funds for Autism East Midlands through the sale of a calendar.



Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Reference and administrative details of the company, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees
L Davies *(resigned 5 May 2022)*
K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan
P Parr
R M Valentine

A Bridge *(appointed 1 February 2022, resigned 16 July 2022)*

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office: Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditors: Smith Cooper Audit Limited, 2 Lace Market Square, Nottingham, NG1 1PB

Bankers: Lloyds Bank Plc, 4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the group and company for the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autisticspectrum disorder and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charity's strategic objectives.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our vision
A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our mission
To advocate, provide and develop highquality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Quality
To ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services by focussing on the following areas:

- Continuing the improvement of the environments within which we work and provide services to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our beneficiaries.
- All of our environments will be designed to minimise restrictions to individuals and maximise their independence.
- By becoming the employer of choice in our field, enabling us to recruit and train staff aligned with our values and skilled in working with autistic people.
- Ensuring the practice in all our services offers purposeful activity enabling individuals we support to maximise their independence in all areas of their lives.
- We will improve our measurement of and focus on person centred services and the delivery of meaningful outcomes for everyone accessing our support.
- We will understand our performance by utilising our quality assurance matrix informed by our review and audit processes.

Increasing the voice of autistic people
We will ensure that the 'voice' of autistic people (in whatever form that takes) is at the heart of everything we do by enabling people to fully participate in all planning and reviews that pertain to them and/or the service that they access.

By supporting autistic people to play a central role in our organisation, as employees, service users, in our performance management and governance.

We will systematically engage with service users in whatever way is most effective for them. We will use this ongoing dialogue to ensure that the decisions we make, both large and small, are shaped by autistic people.

Evidence based support
We will continue to engage with the wider 'autism community' to ensure that we are engaged with the research agenda.

We will ensure that our delivery and interventions are evidence based – wherever evidence exists.

We will ensure that we keep ourselves informed of innovative practice and adjust our delivery in line with innovation.

We will further develop our digital training and resources and make them available to all staff.

Maximum impact

We will invest in our development of services that support autistic people to access work. We will do so in order to access greater resources, demonstrate models of effective practice and influence the national agenda around employment. We will do so as an organisation and also in partnership with others.

To increase participation of autistic people in paid employment

We will develop employment and employability services that enable autistic people that are new to the organisation to access support and develop opportunities for existing students and service users, including the development of social enterprises, micro social enterprises and selfemployment opportunities.

We will continue to grow the number of people accessing our support both in number and in geographic spread. This will include opening new or satellite services.

We will develop services that target autistic people with whom our contact is currently minimal and who are often isolated and find it difficult to find services that meet their needs. In particular, we will develop services that offer social opportunities and advice and guidance for adults without a learning disability.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities and key performance indicators
The charity has continued its financial prudence and has weathered the worst periods of Covid while continuing to support staff and service users to keep safe and maintain wellbeing. Post pandemic, the biggest issue has been the recruitment and retention of staff. This has slowed the full reopening of day services and placed all of our services under pressure.

We were very fortunate to receive 2 legacies this year and these monies have been set aside to maintain our charitable activities, being shared between Employment and Children's Services.

Adults Services
Recruitment issues delayed the opening of our Whitegates respite service, but the majority of the redevelopment work was completed within the year. This service offers 6 self-contained units within a large Victorian villa and grounds within the heart of Worksop.

As Covid restrictions became more limited we supported service users to reengage with the wider community and some of the activities they had enjoyed pre pandemic.

Our new supported living service in Northampton opened and sees us supporting people who had previously been placed a long way from home, often in a hospital setting. This service more than most has seen lives transformed and families reconnected.

Children's Services
Sutherland House School continues to develop and support 65 children. A restructure of the curriculum with a focus on accredited learning has led to many more children working towards accreditation this year. We continue to work towards minimal restriction and as close to zero physical intervention as possible. We do so by having a Positive Behaviour Support ethos throughout the school.

Our Family Support Hubs (funded by the National Lottery) now reach across the East Midlands from Northampton to Gainsborough and in between. These remain a critical service for families with a child or children on the spectrum. In Northampton our children's activity programme is in its third year of Children in Need funding and enables children to experience lots of activities such as Forest Schools and youth clubs that are specific to their autism needs.

b. Investment policy and performance
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

c. Factors relevant to achieve objectives
Autism East Midlands aims to increase its support for people whose lives are affected by autism, whether this is for carers or people receiving direct support. We continue to engage with local employers and companies by providing training and awareness of autism to their staff.

Financial Review

For the year ended 31 March 2022

a. Going concern
After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b. Financial risk management objectives and policies
Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking to make a wide range of cost savings.

c. Principal risks and uncertainties
Financial support, such as infection control grants, workforce retention grants and coronavirus recovery grants mean that, whilst we have seen a financially positive year, 2022 to 2023 is looking much harder.

The recruitment and retention of sufficient staff remains a critical factor for AEM as well as other social care providers. The national shortage of staff means that there is increasingly upward pressure on wages for us to be able to compete. Social care needs the much heralded long term funding solution promised by the current Government now more than ever.

These annual accounts show the pension deficit as a result of participation in the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is a £12.5m deficit as at 31 March 2022 following an estimated actuarial revaluation. The previous actuarial revaluation showed a deficit of £16.5m which was included in the 2020/21 financial statements. The scheme was closed to new participants from April 2013 to limit the future liability. The way the scheme is funded changed in April 2014, and Autism East Midlands paid £119k in the year (2021 £115k) to contribute towards reducing the deficit in addition to routine contributions.

d. Surplus
A surplus of £5,001,907 (2021: Deficit of £4,045,688) has been achieved in the year. This includes an increase in restricted funds of £121,349 (2021: £18,739 reduction).

Total funds at 31 March 2022 are in a deficit of £3,172,115 (2021: £8,174,022 deficit), consisting of £231,013 restricted funds (2021: £109,664), £9,113,872 unrestricted funds (2021: £8,184,314) and a pension deficit of £12,517,000 (2021: £16,468,000 deficit).

e. Principal funding
The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

f. Material investments policy
The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Group and the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and coopted under the terms of the Memorandum of Association.

c. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

d. Pay policy for senior staff

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 26 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in Note 11 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 26.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past, a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain high calibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

e. Organisational structure and decision making

During the year under review, the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and nonresidential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

f. Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

Future developments

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop an additional school in a different county. Having failed to secure a suitable site in the Derby area we are undertaking a review of demand and the best location.

Whilst the Whitegates respite service has been delayed, it will be up and running in the next financial year.

As we learn to live with Covid and things return more and more to normal, we will be redeveloping our CPD offering and launching a new Leadership and Management Programme and a Practice Development Programme.

Members' liability

The members of the company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the company in the event of winding up.

Employee involvement and employment of disabled people

Autism East Midlands recognises the GMB Union. Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The company and the group offer exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and has adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees. Autism East Midlands has a staff group (the Strive Group) where all autistic staff can come together and inform the work of the charity and ensure we offer the best environment possible for autistic colleagues.

The group and the company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of personnel matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are underrepresented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Statement

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

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 group and the company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, 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 of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) 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 group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the group and the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the group and the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the group and the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith

Trustee

Plans for future periods

Future developments

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop an additional school in a different county. Having failed to secure a suitable site in the Derby area we are undertaking a review of demand and the best location.

Whilst the Whitegates respite service has been delayed, it will be up and running in the next financial year.

As we learn to live with Covid and things return more and more to normal, we will be redeveloping our CPD offering and launching a new Leadership and Management Programme and a Practice Development Programme.

Members' liability

The members of the company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the company in the event of winding up.

Employee involvement and employment of disabled people

Autism East Midlands recognises the GMB Union. Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The company and the group offer exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and has adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees. Autism East Midlands has a staff group (the Strive Group) where all autistic staff can come together and inform the work of the charity and ensure we offer the best environment possible for autistic colleagues.

The group and the company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of personnel matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are underrepresented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant 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 of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 group's or the parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve 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 other than the financial statements and our Auditors' 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.

Opinion 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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 Group's and the parent 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 Group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 Auditors' 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations. Based on our understanding of the charitable company and industry, we identify the key laws and regulations affecting the charitable company. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

We identified that the principal risk of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations related to:

- Management bias in respect of accounting estimates and judgements made;
- Management override of control;
- Posting of unusual journals or transactions.

We focused on those areas that could give rise to a material misstatement in the charitable company's financial statements. Our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims, including instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance where available;
- Reviewing legal expenditure in the year to identify instances of noncompliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias. In particular; defined benefit pension liabilities.

It is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or noncompliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of noncompliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 Auditors' Report.

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. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' 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 and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sarah Flear (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of

PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited
Statutory Auditors
2 Lace Market Square
Nottingham
NG1 1PB

PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited are eligible to act as auditors under terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted Funds 20221	Restricted Funds 2022	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021
	Note	£	£	£	£
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	2	263,854	248,036	511,890	476,072
Charitable activities	5	4,096,973		4,096,973	2,114,979
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	10,333,194		10,333,194	9,832,935
Investments	4	100		100	104
Other Income	6	52,990	94,776	147,766	186,883
TOTAL INCOME		**14,747,111**	**342,812**	**15,089,923**	**12,610,973**
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	8,661,104		8,661,104	8,686,321
Charitable activities	7	5,561,449	215,463	5,776,912	3,155,340
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**14,222,553**	**215,463**	**14,438,016**	**11,841,661**
NET INCOME /(EXPENDITURE) BEFORE TRANSFERS		**524,558**	**127,349**	**651,907**	**769,312**
Transfers between Funds	17	6,000	(6,000)		
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE) BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES		**530,558**	**121,349**	**651,907**	**769,312**
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	24	4,350,000		4,350,000	(4,815,000)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**4,880,558**	**121,349**	**5,001,907**	**(4,045,688)**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		(8,283,686)	109,664	(8,174,022)	(4,128,334)
Net movement in funds		4,880,558	121,349	5,001,907	(4,045,688)
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**(3,403,128)**	**231,013**	**(3,172,115)**	**(8,174,022)**

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2022

			2022		2021
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,489,036		6,676,529
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	933,511		521,569	
Cash at bank and in hand	21	4,125,325		4,482,266	
		5,058,836		**5,003,835**	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,557,072)		(1,606,602)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**3,501,764**		**3,397,233**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**10,990,800**		**10,073,762**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,645,915)		(1,779,784)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			**9,344,885**		**8,293,978**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24		(12,517,000)		(16,468,000)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			**(3,172,115)**		**(8,174,022)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	17		231,013		109,664
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	17	9,113,872		8,184,314	
Pension reserve	17	(12,517,000)		(16,468,000)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		(3,403,128)		(8,283,686)
TOTAL DEFICIT			**(3,172,115)**		**(8,174,022)**

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:
G J Smith, Trustee

Company Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2022

			2022		2021
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,489,036		6,676,529
Investments	13		6		6
			7,489,042		6,676,535
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	3,366,939		3,753,725	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,679,260		1,074,725	
		5,046,199		4,828,450	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	**(1,544,489)**		**(1,431,271)**	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**3,501,710**		**3,397,179**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**10,990,752**		**10,073,714**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,645,915)		(1,779,784)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**9,344,837**		**8,293,930**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	24		(12,517,000)		(16,468,000)
TOTAL NET LIABILITIES			**(3,172,163)**		**(8,174,070)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	17		235,667		109,664
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	17	9,109,170		8,184,266	
Pension reserve	17	(12,517,000)		(16,468,000)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		(3,407,830)		(8,283,734)
TOTAL FUNDS			**(3,172,163)**		**(8,174,070)**

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf, by:
G J Smith, Trustee

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2022

		2022	2021
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	20	1,105,607	1,720,799
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets			2,886
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,462,548)	(274,290)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES		**(1,462,548)**	**(271,405)**
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		**(356,941)**	**1,449,394**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**4,482,266**	**3,032,872**
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	21	4,125,325	4,482,266

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England within the United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is given in the company information of these financial statements. The company's registration number is 02053860.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company.

The significant accounting policies that have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2022 the company generated a surplus of £1,050,907 prior to actuarial gains/ losses (2021: £1,047,313 surplus).

1.3 Company status

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Company which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.7 Expenditure

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

- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable activities are costs incurred by the company in the delivery of its activities undertaken to further the purposes of the company, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

At each reporting date the company assesses whether there is any indication of impairment. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined to be the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount.

Freehold property	-	2% Straight Line
Freehold refurbishment	-	5% 33% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	35% 100% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulations are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.9 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.10 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities on a straightline basis over the lease term.

1.11 Taxation

The company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.13 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and shortterm highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.14 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.15 Government grants

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performancerelated conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

1.16 Financial instruments

The group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

The pension charge for the defined benefit pension scheme is based on a full actuarial valuation dated 31 March 2022.

1.18 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	£	£	*£*
Donations	263,854	248,036	**511,890**	*476,072*
Total 2021	*341,428*	*134,644*	*476,072*	

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of results predistribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £754,041 (2021 £637,688). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £918,049 (2021 £508,926).

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	£	£	*£*
INCOME				
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income	4,693,714		**4,693,714**	*4,153,604*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income	5,639,480		**5,639,480**	*5,679,331*
	10,333,194		**10,333,194**	*9,832,935*
EXPENSES				
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses	3,939,673		**3,939,673**	*3,515,916*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses	4,721,431		**4,721,431**	*5,170,405*
	8,661,104		**8,661,104**	*8,686,321*
Net income from subsidiary undertakings	**1,672,090**		**1,672,090**	**1,146,614**

	2022 £	2021 £
CURRENT ASSETS OF THE SUBSIDIARIES WERE:		
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	1,574,552	*3,029,599*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	1,333,227	*537,104*
CURRENT LIABILITIES OF THE SUBSIDIARIES WERE:		
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	(1,574,501)	*(3,029,548)*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	(1,333,224)	*(537,101)*
Total net assets of the subsidiaries	**54**	**54**

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

		Unrestricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
		£	£	*£*
Bank interest		100	**100**	*104*
Total 2021		*104*	*104*	

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		Unrestricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
		£	£	*£*
Provision of services		4,096,973	**4,096,973**	*2,114,979*
Total 2021		*2,114,979*	*2,114,979*	

6. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	£	£	*£*
Other income	44,961		**44,961**	*36,883*
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	8,029		**8,029**	*150,000*
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund		84,943	**84,943**	
Coronavirus Infection Control and Testing Fund		9,833	**9,833**	
	52,990	*94,776*	**147,766**	*186,883*
Total 2021	*186,883*		*186,883*	

7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	5,493,489	215,463	**5,708,952**	*3,063,169*
Fundraising	67,960		**67,960**	*92,171*
	5,561,449	215,463	**5,776,912**	*3,155,340*
Total 2021	*3,007,957*	*147,383*	*3,155,340*	

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2022	Support costs 2022	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	3,232,089	2,476,863	**5,708,952**	*3,063,169*
Fundraising	67,960		**67,960**	*92,171*
	3,300,049	2,476,863	**5,776,912**	*3,155,340*
Total 2021	*1,042,801*	*2,112,539*	*3,155,340*	

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	*£*
Staff costs	**8,240,140**	*7,420,802*
Agency costs	**964,267**	*195,406*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	**(5,904,358)**	*(6,573,407)*
	3,300,049	*1,042,801*

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2022	*Total funds 2021*
	£	*£*
Staff costs	**1,470,104**	*1,618,261*
Depreciation	**548,527**	*485,246*
Other staff costs	**143,628**	*101,276*
Premises costs	**868,217**	*862,848*
IT costs	**307,507**	*489,511*
Legal & professional costs	**140,042**	*146,675*
Insurance costs	**164,737**	*130,010*
Travel costs	**176,442**	*128,917*
Other support costs	**333,229**	*78,379*
Office costs	**106,793**	*104,959*
Governance costs	**27,854**	*22,208*
Marketing costs	**6,128**	*18,701*
Catering cost	**151,774**	*116,684*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	**(1,968,119)**	*(2,191,136)*
Total	**2,476,863**	*2,112,539*

9. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2022	*2021*
	£	*£*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor for the audit of the Group's annual accounts	17,305	*16,475*
Fees payable to the Group's auditor in respect of:		
All taxation services not included above	1,035	*1,025*

10. STAFF COSTS

	Group 2022	*Group 2021*	Company 2022	*Company 2021*
	£	*£*	£	*£*
Wages and salaries	**8,044,087**	*7,520,184*	**8,044,087**	*7,520,184*
Social security costs	**641,207**	*597,399*	**641,207**	*597,399*
Other pension costs (Note 24)	**709,950**	*636,480*	**709,950**	*636,480*
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	**315,000**	*285,000*	**315,000**	*285,000*
	9,710,244	*9,039,063*	**9,710,244**	*9,039,063*

The average number of persons employed by the Group and Company during the year was as follows:

	Group and Company 2022	*Group and Company 2021*
	No.	*No.*
Teaching staff	**105**	*92*
Care staff	**297**	*281*
Management and Administration	**30**	*38*
	432	*411*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2022	*Group 2021*
	No.	*No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000		*1*
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	**1**	*1*
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	**2**	*1*
In the band £100,001 - £200,000	**1**	*1*

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2021 £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2022, expenses totalling £474 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee *(2021 £70 to 1 Trustee)*.

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group and Company

	Freehold property and refurbs	Vehicles & equipment	Assets under construction	Leasehold improvements	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1 April 2021	8,772,329	846,615		257,448	9,876,392
Additions	728,405	162,124	572,019		1,462,548
At 31 March 2022	9,500,734	1,008,739	572,019	257,448	11,338,940
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2021	2,396,886	545,529		257,448	3,199,863
Charge for the year	386,737	161,789			548,526
Impairment charge	101,515				101,515
At 31 March 2022	2,885,138	707,318		257,448	3,849,904
Net book value					
At 31 March 2022	6,615,596	301,421	572,019		7,489,036
At 31 March 2021	*6,375,443*	*301,086*			*6,676,529*

13. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Investments in subsidiary companies
Company	£
Cost and NBV	
At 1 April 2021	6
At 31 March 2022	6

Principal Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

Company	Company number	Basis of control	Holding
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	08056114	Equity share capital	100%
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	03381476	Equity share capital	100%

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

Company	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit for the year £	Net assets £
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	5,639,480	(4,721,431)	918,049	3
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	4,693,714	(3,939,673)	754,041	51

14. DEBTORS

	Group	*Group*	Company	*Company*
	2022	*2021*	2022	*2021*
	£	*£*	£	*£*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**817,168**	*420,020*	**355,454**	*128,564*
Amounts owed by group undertakings			**2,895,142**	*3,523,612*
Other debtors	**53,906**	*10,080*	**53,906**	*10,080*
Prepayments and accrued income	**62,437**	*91,469*	**62,437**	*91,469*
	933,511	*521,569*	**3,366,939**	*3,753,725*

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2022	*2021*	2022	*2021*
	£	*£*	£	*£*
Bank loans	**138,274**	*134,561*	**138,274**	*134,561*
Trade creditors		*279,567*		*279,567*
Other taxation and social security	**486,023**	*577,128*	**486,023**	*577,128*
Other creditors	**87,222**	*282,627*	**87,222**	*123,076*
Accruals and deferred income	**845,553**	*332,719*	**832,970**	*316,939*
	1,557,072	*1,606,602*	**1,544,489**	*1,431,271*

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2022	*2021*	**2022**	*2021*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Bank loans	**1,645,915**	*1,779,784*	**1,645,915**	*1,779,784*

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

		Group		Company
	2022	*2021*	**2022**	*2021*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Between one and two years				
Bank loans	**142,185**	*138,275*	**142,185**	*138,275*
Between two and five years				
Bank loans	**452,282**	*439,354*	**452,282**	*439,354*
Over five years				
Bank loans	**1,051,448**	*1,202,155*	**1,051,448**	*1,202,155*

The aggregate amount of liabilities payable or repayable wholly or in part more than five years after the reporting date is:

		Group		Company
	2022	*2021*	**2022**	*2021*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Repayable by instalments	**1,051,448**	*1,202,155*	**1,051,448**	*1,202,155*

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% and repayments are repayable monthly.

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Fund	8,184,266	4,413,917	(5,162,449)	1,678,090		9,113,824
Reserves - subsidiaries	48	10,333,194	(8,661,104)	(1,672,090)		48
Pension reserve	(16,468,000)		(399,000)		4,350,000	(12,517,000)
	(8,283,686)	**14,747,111**	**(14,222,553)**	**6,000**	**4,350,000**	**(3,403,128)**
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7,698		(321)			7,377
Jones Trust	23,498	37,500		(6,000)		54,998
Wilson Foundation	16,000		(6,530)			9,470
Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	55,085	88,285	(80,233)			63,137
Children in Need	4,488	35,581	(22,230)			17,839
Building Better Opportunities	2,895	5,438	(8,333)			
Duke of Edinburgh		3,040	(3,040)			
BNA Charitable Organisation		75,000				75,000
Old Heanorians		3,192				3,192
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund		84,943	(84,943)			
Infection Control Fund		9,833	(9,833)			
	109,664	**342,812**	**(215,463)**	**(6,000)**		**231,013**
Total of funds	**(8,174,022)**	**15,089,923**	**(14,438,016)**		**4,350,000**	**(3,172,115)**

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a programme to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The Lottery Autism Family Support Hubs fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Building Better Opportunities this fund allows us to support adults to make progress towards employment, training or volunteering.

Jones Trust The Jones Trust made a contribution towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school. This donation has been fully spent but the income is being released to the Statement of Financial Activities in line with the depreciation charged on the assets acquired.

Children in Need Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

BNA Charitable Organisation Funding received from the BNA Charitable Organisation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Old Heanorians This funding received from Old Heanorians is to support the Heanor Family Support Hub.

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in /out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Fund	7,118,215	2,643,394	(2,729,957)	1,152,614		8,184,266
Reserves - subsidiaries	48	9,832,935	(8,686,321)	(1,146,614)		48
Pension reserve	(11,375,000)		(278,000)		(4,815,000)	(16,468,000)
	(4,256,737)	**12,476,329**	**(11,694,278)**	**6,000**	**(4,815,000)**	**(8,283,686)**
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7,698					7,698
Jones Trust	29,498			(6,000)		23,498
Wilson Foundation	16,000					16,000
Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	40,172	87,999	(73,086)			55,085
Children in Need	26,645	6,993	(29,150)			4,488
Building Better Opportunities	8,390	16,902	(22,397)			2,895
Children in Need 2		2,750	(2,750)			
Nottingham Community Foundation		10,000	(10,000)			
Hobson Charity		10,000	(10,000)			
	128,403	**134,644**	**(147,383)**	**(6,000)**		**109,664**
Total of funds	**(4,128,334)**	**12,610,973**	**(11,841,661)**		**(4,815,000)**	**(8,174,022)**

18. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	(8,283,686)	14,747,111	(14,222,553)	6,000	4,350,000	(3,403,128)
Restricted funds	109,664	342,812	(215,463)	(6,000)		231,013
	(8,174,022)	**15,089,923**	**(14,438,016)**		**4,350,000**	**(3,172,115)**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/ out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	(4,256,737)	12,476,329	(11,694,278)	6,000	(4,815,000)	(8,283,686)
Restricted funds	128,403	134,644	(147,383)	(6,000)		109,664
	(4,128,334)	**12,610,973**	**(11,841,661)**		**(4,815,000)**	**(8,174,022)**

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total funds 2022
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	7,434,038	54,998	7,489,036
Current assets	4,882,821	176,015	5,058,836
Creditors due within one year	(1,557,072)		(1,557,072)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,645,915)		(1,645,915)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(12,517,000)		(12,517,000)
Total	**(3,403,128)**	**231,013**	**(3,172,115)**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	6,653,031	23,498	6,676,529
Current assets	4,917,669	86,166	5,003,835
Creditors due within one year	(1,606,602)		(1,606,602)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,779,784)		(1,779,784)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(16,468,000)		(16,468,000)
	(8,283,686)	**109,664**	**(8,174,022)**

20. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Group	Group
	2022	2021
	£	£
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**651,907**	769,312
ADJUSTMENT FOR:		
Depreciation charges	**548,526**	485,246
Impairment of property valuation	**101,515**	
Profit on the sale of fixed assets		(2,885)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	**(411,942)**	576,622
Decrease in creditors	**(183,399)**	(385,496)
FRS102 pension adjustments	**399,000**	278,000
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**1,105,607**	1,720,799

21. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	Group	*Group*
	2022	*2021*
	£	*£*
Cash in hand	**4,125,325**	*4,482,266*
TOTAL	**4,125,325**	*4,482,266*

22. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2021	Cash flows	Other noncash changes	At 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	4,482,266	(356,941)		4,125,325
Debt due within 1 year	(134,561)	134,561	(138,274)	(138,274)
Debt due after 1 year	(1,779,784)	(4,405)	138,274	(1,645,915)
	2,567,921	**(226,785)**		**2,341,136**

23. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2021 the group and company had capital commitments as follows:

	Group	*Group*	Company	*Company*
	2022	*2021*	**2022**	*2021*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements		*575,000*		*575,000*

24. PENSION COMMITMENTS

Retirement benefits to employees of the Group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trusteeadministered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 March 2022 was £291,000 (2021: £349,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £254,000 (2021: £301,000) and employees' contributions totalled £37,000 (2021: £48,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 20.8% per cent for employers and 12.5% per cent for employees.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and the interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

24. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	2022	*2021*
	%	*%*
Discount rate at 31 March	**2.6**	*2.00*
Future salary increases	**3.2**	*2.85*
Future pension increases	**3.2**	*2.85*

	At 31 March 2022	*At 31 March 2021*
	Years	*Years*
Mortality rates (in years)		
for a male aged 65 now	**21**	*21.6*
at 65 for a male aged 45 now	**22.3**	*22.9*
for a female aged 65 now	**23.8**	*24.3*
at 65 for a female aged 45 now	**25.2**	*25.7*

Sensitivity analysis (applied to gross defined benefit liability)

	At 31 March 2022	*At 31 March 2021*
	£	*£*
Discount rate +0.1%	**33,679,000**	*36,044,000*
Discount rate -0.1%	**35,156,000**	*37,634,000*
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	**35,914,000**	*38,450,000*
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	**32,968,000**	*35,279,000*
Pension increase rate +0.1%	**35,114,000**	*37,586,000*
Pension decrease rate -0.1%	**33,718,000**	*36,090,000*

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	Fair value at 31 March 2022	*Fair value at 31 March 2021*
	£	*£*
Equities	**13,262,000**	*12,972,000*
Gilts	**645,000**	*721,000*
Other bonds	**1,493,000**	*1,522,000*
Property	**2,813,000**	*2,160,000*
Cash	**1,225,000**	*1,089,000*
Other	**2,454,000**	*1,898,000*
Total market value of assets	**21,892,000**	*20,362,000*

24. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

The actual return on scheme assets was £1,857,000 (2021 £3,705,000).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Current service cost	**(315,000)**	*(285,000)*
Interest on obligation	**(327,000)**	*(264,000)*
Past service cost		*(23,000)*
Administrative expenses	**(11,000)**	*(7,000)*
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	**(653,000)**	*(579,000)*

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Opening defined benefit obligation	**36,830,000**	*28,393,000*
Current service cost	**315,000**	*285,000*
Contributions by scheme participants	**37,000**	*48,000*
Actuarial (gains)/losses	**(2,897,000)**	*8,124,000*
Interest cost	**731,000**	*660,000*
Past service costs		*23,000*
Estimated Benefits paid net of transfers	**(607,000)**	*(703,000)*
Closing defined benefit obligation	**34,409,000**	*36,830,000*

Movements in the fair value of the Group's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Opening fair value of scheme assets	**20,362,000**	*17,018,000*
Interest income	**404,000**	*396,000*
Actuarial gains	**1,453,000**	*3,309,000*
Administrative expenses	**(11,000)**	*(7,000)*
Contributions by employer	**254,000**	*301,000*
Contributions by scheme participants	**37,000**	*48,000*
Closing fair value of scheme assets	**(607,000)**	*(703,000)*
	21,892,000	*20,362,000*

25. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2022 the Group and the Company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under noncancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2022	Group 2021
GROUP AND COMPANY	£	£
AMOUNTS PAYABLE:		
Not later than 1 year	**133,804**	*77,644*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**173,209**	*249,064*
Later than 5 years		*49,372*
	307,013	*376,080*

26. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Company has not entered into any related party transaction during the year, nor are there any outstanding balances owing between related parties and the Company at 31 March 2022.

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, Finance Director and Headteacher. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £398,576 (2021 £362,696) for short term employment benefits and £28,964 (2021 £28,396) for postemployment benefits.



AEM Autism East Midlands

Our achievements over the past year have been the result of the work of our dedicated staff, combined with the significant support of all our partners. If you would like to get involved in our work, we would love to hear from you.

This information can be provided in a more accessible format by contacting **enquiries@aem.org.uk**

For more information...
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Autism East Midlands

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Registered charity no. 517954
Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England no. 2053860

AUTISM EAST MIDLANDS

England & Wales - Charity number 517954

Accounts

Annual Review
2020 - 2021

AEM
Autism East Midlands



Our year in Covid 2020-21

March 2020 marked the start of a challenging year across the globe with the outbreak of the pandemic. For us, it meant working in a different way so that we could continue to provide the support needed by autistic people and their families.

Over the following pages, you'll read about our year; what happened and how we adapted.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism. To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence. Our well trained and passionate staff offer a wide range of services to help individuals to live their lives the way they want.



George Smith: Chair of Trustees

As we enter a new decade, we are no less committed to achieving our vision; a world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the support they need.

The start of 2020 saw us engulfed by the coronavirus pandemic. Despite this, we have been able to expand our provision, as well as effectively navigate through the pandemic and the challenges posed. During this time the Trustees continued to observe and contribute to meetings at more regular intervals so that we could keep abreast of changes, issues and the financial implications of service interruptions.

Day Services, Family Support Hubs and youth clubs, where people met in person, were temporarily curtailed. However, we were able to hold meetings and meet with families and friends online throughout the lockdown restrictions.

During the summer of 2020 some form of normal service was able to resume and our residents from Whitegates were able to move to our new locations in Retford.

I would like to say thank you to all the families who have worked with us over the past year. I would also like to express my thanks to all the employees of Autism East Midlands for their efforts during this period. Without you, the organisation would not have been able to function as it had.



Jane Howson: Chief Executive Officer

The past financial year 2020/21 has been like no other. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic began at the turn of the year with the first national lockdown coming into force during the last week in March. This was the start of a rollercoaster year, which I think has been the most challenging of my working life. It has been a year of constantly changing rules and very high levels of staff absence, matched with very high levels of need.

At AEM we responded quickly to the pandemic in a bid to keep everybody safe. We sent home 92 staff with underlying health conditions which, at the time, the public health assessment suggested put them at greater risk. We maintained full pay. We also used our bulk purchase powers to provide food parcels to staff, service users and families when the supermarkets had shortages.

When several of our services moved online, staff were incredibly flexible and moved to support our critical residential and supported living services. I am extremely grateful to staff for their flexibility and extraordinarily proud of their response in such uncertain and anxious times.

Sutherland House School remained open for children who needed in person teaching and very rapidly developed new skills to teach online, delivering some amazingly creative sessions. We remained physically open for a reduced number of children throughout Easter and half-term holidays. I would like to thank staff who sacrificed their time off.

Autistic people have really felt the impact of Covid19 with changes to routines, heightened levels of anxiety and often increased isolation. Throughout the last year our staff have really focused on maintaining the support that people on the spectrum and their families have needed. Our Family Support and Children's Services embraced the online world delivering materials and ingredients to children's doors so that they could take part in the 70 different activities we offered.

During the brief loosening of restrictions last summer, we managed to move the residents of Whitegates into our £2million developments of Iedale and South Lodge in Retford. We are already seeing the benefits that the more autism friendly environments are offering the individuals who live there.

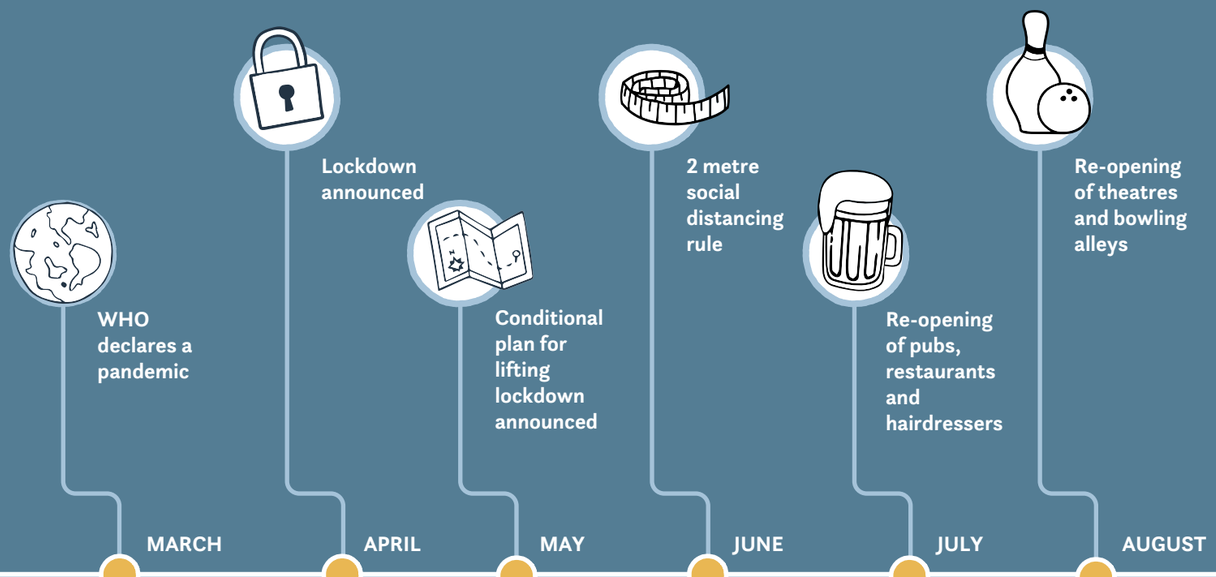
We sadly lost to cancer one of our much-loved residents, Caroline at the end of 2020. She will be forever in the hearts of those who cared for her and her friends with whom she shared her life.

The year ended much as it started with lockdown.

We continue delivering services to the absolute best of our abilities. As we have throughout the pandemic, we strive every day to keep everybody safe, while supporting them to live meaningful and fulfilled lives.

UK Covid 19 Timeline:
What was happening nationally

2020 - 2021



AEM Timeline:
How we responded

March **2020**

Our world was about to change. The Covid 19 virus was officially declared a global pandemic and the Prime Minister announced that we were all to 'stay at home.'

How we responded...

- Schools across the nation closed to all except for vulnerable students. As a non-maintained specialist school, Sutherland House School remained open. Some students carried on learning in school. Those who had to isolate or stay at home did not miss out though. They instead benefited from creative remote learning sessions and were given packs so they could learn from home.
- Our Flexible Day Support services changed their model of support. We kept in touch with service users and their families by making regular phone calls. We also introduced online activities to help boost morale.
- Despite everything going on in the outside world, it was business as usual across our accommodation-based services. Our teams continued to provide their normal day to day support – albeit in full protective wear (PPE).
- As the country faced a lack of PPE, we worked with our local community to produce face masks and anything needed to protect service users and staff.



Our teams worked together to provide food parcels to all those in our community who were not able to shop for essentials during lockdown.



A production line was organised at different centres, including Hamilton Adult Services (pictured), Sutherland House School, Dukeries Day Centre and our Head Office.



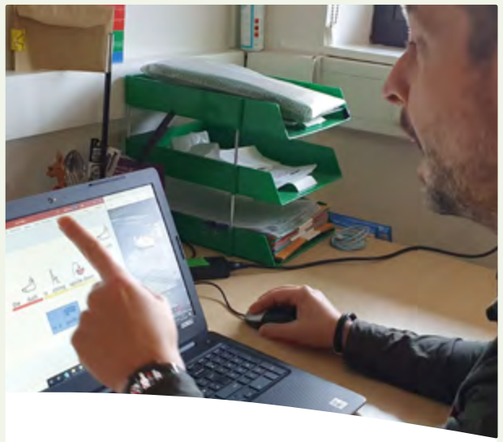
During lockdown, routines at Sutherland House School were significantly different. These changes could have proved challenging for students. Staff adapted timetables though so that students could continue to enjoy positive school experiences.



School students continued to learn and celebrate all the activities, holidays, and birthdays that were important to them.

April **2020**

- Almost a third of all staff were furloughed. Recognising the challenging times and the commitment of staff, the Board of Trustees announced that staff would be furloughed on a full wage.
- Those that could work from home did and a variety of online activities were planned to keep morale high. These included fancy dress days, a virtual ‘bake off’ and a pizza making session.
- We fully embraced the use of technology. Thankfully Teams software had been installed back in 2019 and so when lockdown hit, we were already ahead of the game. It meant everyone was able to easily keep in touch and talking face to face online made things so much easier. Regular manager briefings took place and weekly newsletters were introduced to keep everyone was in the loop.
- Sutherland House School remained open during the Easter holiday to help those parents who were key workers.
- Staff were invited to take part in a 2.6 Challenge to help raise money for Autism East Midlands. Our CEO Jane Howson successfully completed her 2.6 Challenge by completing her goal of cycling 260 miles from her front room on her exercise bike!

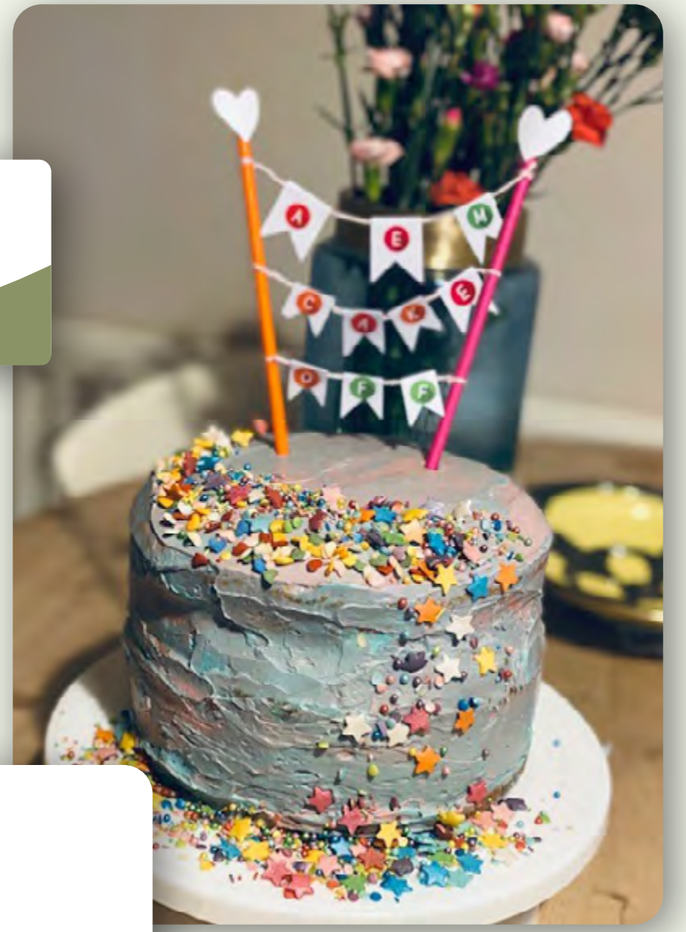


Our Speech and Language therapists designed a whole set of resources for use in video sessions. It gave us a way of keeping therapy going for students during the times when they were not in school. Language games were also created and students enjoyed completing these remotely from home.



Our environment began to look a little different across our services, offices, and school.

Talented bakers across the organisation took part in an online ‘bake off’.





Like our CEO, many joined our 2.6 Challenge campaign including Dan Adams (pictured) who took his daily walks during lockdown in Star Trek themed fancy dress.

May **2020**

Lockdown continued and the country stayed at home.

How we responded...

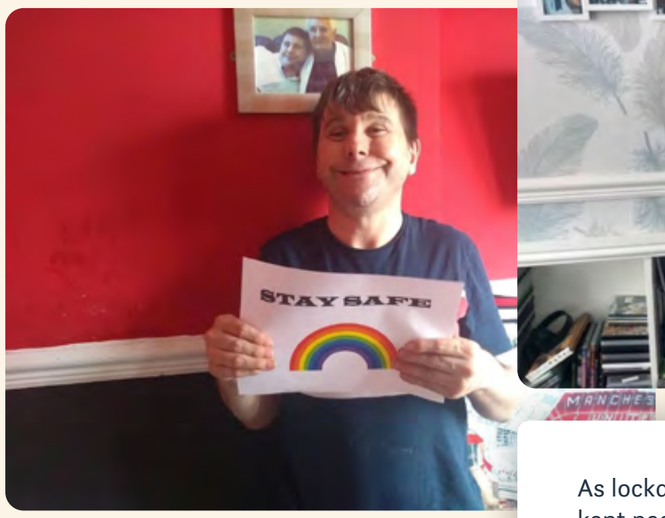
- When it was no longer possible to meet in person, the Family Support Hubs moved online. Families were able to meet virtually and share their experiences through the power of Zoom. Online activities included gaming sessions, which were a real hit and more people got involved than would normally access hubs.
- Across our accommodation-based services, activities were arranged to ensure service users could manage any changes to their routine. In the absence of home visits, Facetime video calls were arranged.
- Our flexible day support services continued to be delivered remotely.
- The team at the Sherwood Centre went into overdrive as they redecorated their building so that it was ready and waiting for when people could return.
- We continued to take part in the annual Silly Sock Day. Many people threw their support behind the awareness day and helped boost vital funds for Autism East Midlands.
- Many of our accommodation-based services celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Our Carlton Road services went all out to celebrate, making flags and decorating their homes and enjoyed a special afternoon tea.
- Extra support was organised for all staff who faced childcare difficulties.
- And staff at our accommodation-based services continued to wear full PPE!



When we began to miss shops, pubs and cafes, our accommodation-based services got creative. Beechwood services, for instance, set up their own pub at home. Others set up their own 'tuck' shops and home cinemas.



The 75th anniversary of VE Day was celebrated in style across our accommodation-based services with fancy dress parties, afternoon tea, and sing-alongs.





As lockdown restrictions continued, we kept people connected and organised online calls with family members.



Rachel Hardy, a member of staff, set herself the task of dressing up each day for 26 days for her daily dog walk as part of the 2.6 Challenge to raise money.



June **2020**

This month saw restrictions slowly ease with the reopening of some schools and non-essential shops.

How we responded...

- Head office reopened again. Staff returned to the office and a rota was put in place so that not everyone was working in the building at the same time.
- A resource pack was produced by our clinical team and sent out to all adult service users to help them during these changing times.
- Sutherland House School worked in 'bubbles' to keep staff and students safe. Some children accessed lessons via Zoom. One class even learned from afar how to code their own games.
- Families were still able to access any support they needed from our Support Hubs through online activities and through telephone calls.
- Our support staff continued to tirelessly work through the many restrictions, wearing PPE around the clock.



To replace swimming sessions and community visits, students at Sutherland House School instead enjoyed interactive music and ICT sessions.

To keep routine and consistency in place, school students were given the opportunity to follow familiar morning routines. Providing emotional support for students concerned about the pandemic was important.





Students took part in innovative projects. Class 2 loved their caterpillar project, where they got the chance to watch the different stages of their development. Once the caterpillars had transformed into butterflies the children enjoyed setting them free.

July **2020**

The UK's first 'local lockdown' was applied in Leicester and parts of Leicestershire.

How we responded...

- Restrictions had eased slightly across the country but support staff continued to wear PPE throughout their work.
- To maintain morale, online quizzes were introduced for our staff.
- Recruitment began again to fill job vacancies within our services.
- New staff joined us and induction courses moved online, which was a very different experience for trainers and learners. Between April 2020 and March 2021, more than 2,000 internal and external training courses were held.
- Loughborough Family Support Hub continued to hold activities in person in their hub as well as providing valuable support via telephone when needed

One thing we were all able to do was enjoy the outdoors. Many of our service users enjoyed gardening – some for the very first time. Those living at Carlton Road (pictured) grew their own vegetables in their allotment.





Online activities continued throughout the summer and morale was boosted with online quizzes for staff – in fancy dress!

Our Northampton Family Support Hub hosted fun activities in spacious grounds outdoors.





August **2020**

- We carried on with developments despite Covid. Service users moved into our new £2million development at South Lodge and Iedale in Retford.

  Moving home was no mean feat for anyone during the pandemic but this move provided an exciting opportunity for our service users. They were able to choose their own furniture and surroundings so that they were comfortable in their individual new flats.

  A meticulous person-centred plan was carried out and the Speech and Language Therapists produced each service user with their own personalised guide to their new flat to give them a good start to their time in their new home.

- In other areas of our services holiday season was in full flow. Many of our service users were able to return to some of the places they had loved visiting before lockdown. These included trips to the coast.
- And staff continued to wear PPE throughout their work.







Some of our services were able to enjoy safe day trips out to the places they had enjoyed before lockdown. Trips out from The Poplars included visits to the zoo and to the seaside.



'We would like to thank you and your staff for looking after the residents and keeping them safe from the virus.'

A Worksop parent





Our Sherwood Centre organised a Sports Day event for our service users and a little friendly competition. Activities included egg and spoon racing, archery, some football games and bean bag throwing.



September **2020**

The ‘rule of six’ was introduced in England with social gatherings of groups of more than six banned.

How we responded...

- Our Adult Flexible Day Support Services implemented ‘bubbles’ based around the special interests of each of our service users. It meant that groups of up to six could mix. Our service users were involved in how they wanted their unique social distancing ‘bubble’ to look.
- Changes were made to the building at Sutherland House School to ensure the continued safety of students and staff. Covid safe measures were implemented to the main reception, corridors and classrooms. The main entrance was redecorated, and new furniture added before the arrival of students for the new term.
- Staff kept in regular contact with parents and carers of our students to offer support and guidance.
- Students at the school were able to work in small groups when they returned for the new term.



Day Services reopened their buildings once again and, Jamie (pictured) was just one of the service users able to return to our Dukeries Day Centre. Jamie enjoyed arts and crafts, using the computer, and local walks with his group.

‘It is wonderful that service users can confidently return to their day service provision. It was greatly missed for many weeks, and I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work and dedication. Joe has settled back into a ‘slightly different routine’ very well and that is down to the support and patience of the staff.’

Jennifer W, a parent



As our service users began to take days out again, a trip was organised from The Poplars to Sherwood Phoenix Pianos in Mansfield. The group was given special access to the grand piano hall.



Students at Sutherland House School were also able to enjoy outdoor learning, working in the allotment and harvesting fruit and vegetables.

October **2020**

The government announced a new three tier system and new rules came into place.

- The Flexible Day Support services were now open and they were able to take the opportunity to arrange more activities again in ‘bubbles’ of not more than six people.

  Before lockdown Sherwood Day Centre regularly organised activities such as bowling, trampolining, cinema, pub lunches, and conservation work. The new restrictions meant that alternative activities had to be found. Service users got the chance to try out new hobbies including baking, music, and jigsaw puzzle sessions, which proved surprisingly popular. A projector room was also created at Sherwood Day Centre for movie afternoons.

- Halloween celebrations continued across our accommodation-based services. Service users at Worksop’s Carlton Road marked Halloween by decorating pumpkins and holding their own small Halloween party.

> *‘Thank you to all at Carlton Road for your care and affection for our son during this past year. We appreciate everything you do for him and therefore for us as his family.’*
>
> **Worksop parents, said of AEM’s support for their son**



Pumpkin carving and dressing up took place at various services.

> *‘Hamilton staff were amazing at helping us through lockdown. The calls reminded me that they cared about us. Hamilton staff = highest respect and empathy for others. Lockdown = conquered.*
>
> **Daniel, service user**

Throughout the autumn term, students continued to learn and develop their skills through tools such as interactive floor maps (pictured bottom right).





November **2020**

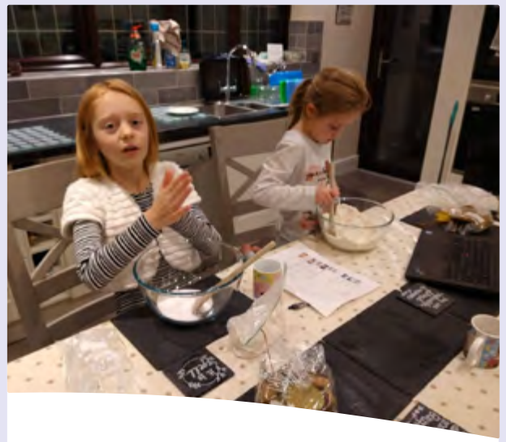
The second lockdown hit. Government guidelines were regularly updated and we had to work fast to continually meet the challenges of the quickly changing times.

How we responded...

- Covid 19 self-isolation policy came into play for all services and staff.
- Our Family Support Hubs and Children's Service embraced online technologies once again, hosting a wide variety of activities. A mix of activities were held virtually to keep everyone connected and one to one support was provided, where needed. This included the hugely popular baking sessions where packs of ingredients with instructions were sent out to anyone wanting to take part in the online session. Individuals and their families then tuned in to the session and were guided through the baking sessions step by step.
- Support staff continued to wear PPE as they had been doing throughout the year.

'I would like to say a big thank you to all the staff at Carlton Road who looked after our boys. I know that it is challenging in normal times and must be even more of a challenge during these unprecedented times. The care you give is always without question, but during this pandemic you have been so thoughtful making sure our boys have different activities to look forward to because they haven't been able to do their usual things. At the same time, you have been so sensitive and caring to parents and guardians who for various reasons cannot visit their loved ones. The cards, photos and messages that you send us help us to keep in touch and the phone calls I receive to check that I am ok and to give me updates is really appreciated.'

A parent shared their thanks for all our support



Activities were held online to ensure we were able to continue our support. Our Northamptonshire Youth Clubs together baked up some brownies with the support of our staff during online baking sessions.

'A massive thank you to AEM Rotherham Hub. You have made my boy's life so happy for the past two years! Everyone involved will know what and who I mean.'

Jackie from Rotherham



Those living at The Poplars in Whitwell were not able to attend a local bonfire display on Bonfire Night as they would normally and so they organised their own celebration at home. Lanterns and lights were placed around their garden, and they enjoyed food and singing on their patio instead.

December **2020**

The second lockdown ended. As virus levels increased though, the Prime Minister urged the public to keep their festive celebrations 'short' and 'small.'

New rules meant that for the first time ever many of our service users weren't able to travel to spend Christmas with their families and loved ones. It meant Christmas 2020 was going to be unusual for everyone across the accommodation-based services.

How we responded...

- We wanted to make Christmas as special as we could for our service users. The Speech and Language Therapy team created a resource to enable our service users to tell us about their typical Christmas Day routines and what they'd like to do, using symbols, writing and images.
- A Christmas Appeal was launched to encourage supporters to donate and share a message of support across our community. Some of our service users shared the stories of their challenges online.
- 39 Christmas sign-along and symbol-along books were created so that staff and service users could watch films and take part in sing and sign-alongs.
- Staff and service users alike got involved in our 12 Days of Christmas celebration. Different teams dressed in fancy dress and were filmed, singing a line from a festive favourite. Each film was shared online.
- This month also marked the 20th Anniversary of our Beechwood Residential Service and our service users and staff celebrated this milestone with a party.
- For the first time ever service users celebrated Christmas Day with their AEM family instead of returning home to see their families. Old traditions were recreated and new ones shaped. At Carlton Road staff and service users created Christmas Eve Boxes for the first time.

'Thank you for maintaining the morale of our loved ones and members of the families during the pandemic. The innovative mementoes we have are testimony to the imagination, initiative, and enterprise of the staff who have instigated them.'



To keep morale going a fancy dress day was held for staff at the office (pictured).



Our virtual Northamptonshire Youth Club got creative, building spaghetti and marshmallow towers and they painted salt dough leaves to make seasonal garlands.



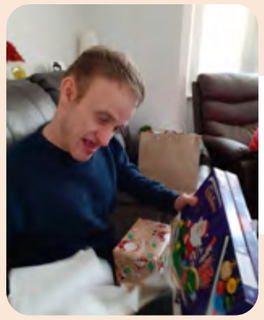
Students at Sutherland House School got into the Christmas spirit and made their own festive arts and crafts, including baubles and Christmas trees.



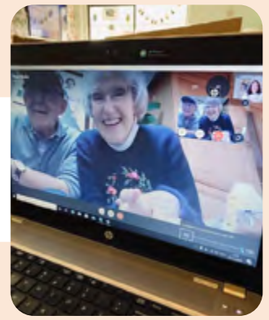
At Hill Top, staff talked to service users about what their normal Christmas looked like, so that we could recreate some of their traditions. We filmed some of it so that their family could see them following those traditions.



While the setting was different to normal, all the traditions of Christmas Day were observed across all the services including The Poplars (pictured), Carlton Road, Hill Top and South Lodge and Iedale.



Christmas Day at Beechwood was celebrated for the first time with their AEM family.



As many were unable to spend Christmas with their families, our staff organised separate celebrations online for individuals with their families.



People living at Beechwood celebrated the 20th anniversary of the opening of the homes.



Staff and service users joined the 12 Days of Christmas celebration. Individual teams dressed in costumes and sang a line from their festive favourite song, which was then shared online.

January **2021**

The third national lockdown began.

How we responded...

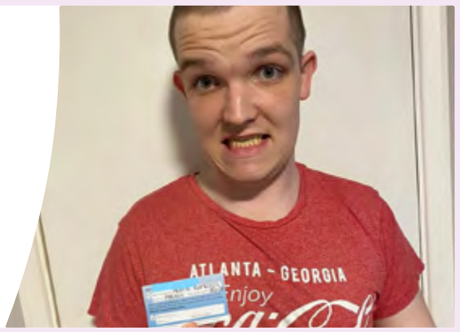
- The roll out of the vaccination programme began with service users and staff benefiting from the first vaccinations.
- Themed online meetings were also launched this month to encourage more families to access our Family Support Hubs and share their experiences and gain advice.
- Our online Information, Advice and Guidance Service was launched for one-to-one sessions to help autistic people learn more about employment opportunities.

We celebrated the end of a challenging year and planned for a positive future. New Year parties were held across our services including at Carlton Road (pictured right).





The vaccination programme rolled out across our services.



Our Forest School Family Support Hub organised outdoor activities, where children, under the guidance of adults, were able to learn crafts while enjoying the outdoors.



February **2021**

- Our senior team leaders actively encouraged staff to vaccinate as the fantastic vaccination programme continued.
- Sutherland House School continued to work in 'bubbles' and staff were routinely tested so that teaching in schools could be maintained.
- The school carried on its creative learning programme, including arranging a wide variety of fun activities for Science Week.
- It also remained open during the half term holiday to help those parents, who needed their children to attend.
- As part of Internet Safety Week, the IT department at our school shared useful resources to help families adapt to remote learning online. This included a 'Parenting in a Digital World' booklet and an Online Learning Poster for parents and guardians.



Sutherland House School had been delivering the curriculum throughout the year and during Science Week students took part in a variety of creative activities that brought science to life.



Despite all that was going on in the outside world, we cut our waiting list time for our specialist assessment centre, the Elizabeth Newson Centre, from 12 months to six months.

Throughout the year we celebrated all the special days, birthdays and holidays that we could to keep up morale. This month service users marked Pancake Day in the usual way, enjoying pancakes with all their favourite toppings.



March **2021**

Stay at home restrictions were lifted and care home residents were allowed one regular visitor.

For us this meant:

- As restrictions began to slowly ease, it was possible once more for us to welcome visitors back into our accommodation-based services. Our service users were able to have visits from family and friends again.
- Our Support Hubs continued to provide support online to families. Activities arranged online included Easter 'make and bake' sessions and would-be bakers across the nation joined us in their droves.



As in previous years, World Book Day was celebrated in different services and people dressed as book characters.



The past year saw many of us trying out new hobbies and interests. We discovered some hidden talents amongst our service users. Gardening, baking and crafting all became really popular and at our Sherwood Centre many put their skills to good use by creating bird boxes.

Our Year **In Numbers**



168 people supported in our Flexible Day Support services.



43 people supported through registered residential services.



8 people were supported to live independently.



Northamptonshire Service ran **20** face-to-face holiday and youth clubs PLUS **45** virtual sessions! This included online gaming sessions, film club and youth clubs.



32 children and young people accessed our Northamptonshire service.



132 online Family Support Hub sessions held.



261 families supported over the year through both face to face and virtual Hub sessions.



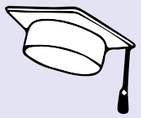
285 children attended online and face to face Family Support Hub sessions.



90 *'clinical resources and advice packs'* were made for students, service users and those supporting them throughout the first lockdown.



18 visual resources were made to help tell service users all about vaccines.



10 students supported through Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) at universities across the UK.



13 autistic people supported into paid or voluntary employment.



24 new students joined Sutherland House School.



47 respite stays arranged in just five months.



2,000 phone calls made to service users and their families during lockdown.



22 Covid updates for staff were produced during peak times of the pandemic.

Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Reference and administrative details of the company, its Trustees and Advisers for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Trustees
L Davies
K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan
P Parr (appointed 2 December 2020)
R M Valentine (appointed 2 December 2020)

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office: Unit 31 Crags Industrial Estate Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditors: Smith Cooper Audit Limited, 2 Lace Market Square, Nottingham, NG1 1PB

Bankers: Lloyds Bank Plc, 4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the group and the company for the 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), applicable to charity's preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) as amended by Update Bulletin 1 (effective 1 January 2015)

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autistic-spectrum disorder and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charities strategic objectives.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values people with autism, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information and support in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling people with autism to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities of Autism East Midlands are:

Quality

To ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services by focusing on the following areas:

- Continuing the improvement of the environments within which we work and provide services to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our beneficiaries.
- All of our environments will be designed to minimise restrictions to individuals and maximise their independence.
- By becoming the employer of choice in our field, enabling us to recruit and train staff aligned with our values and skilled in working with autistic people.
- Ensuring practice in all our services offers purposeful activity enabling individuals we support to maximise their independence in all areas of their lives.
- We will improve our measurement of and focus on person centred services and the delivery of meaningful outcomes for everyone accessing our support.
- We will understand our performance by utilising our quality assurance matrix informed by our review and audit processes.

Increasing the voice of people with autism

We will ensure that the 'voice' of autistic people (in whatever form that takes) is at the heart of everything we do.

By enabling people to fully participate in all planning and reviews that pertain to them and/or the service that they access. By supporting autistic people to play a central role in our organisation, as employees, service users, in our performance management and governance.

We will systematically engage with service users in whatever way is most effective for them. We will use this ongoing dialogue to ensure that the decisions we make, both large and small, are shaped by autistic people.

Evidence Based Support

We will continue to engage with the wider 'autism community' to ensure that we are engaged with the research agenda.

We will ensure that our delivery and interventions are evidence based – wherever evidence exists.

We will ensure that we keep ourselves informed of innovative practice and adjust our delivery in line with innovation.

We will further develop our digital training and resources and make them available to all staff..

Maximum Impact

We will invest in our development of services that support autistic people to access work. We will do so in order to access greater resources, demonstrate models of effective practice and influence the national agenda around employment. We will do so as an organisation and also in partnership with others.

To increase participation of autistic people in paid employment.

We will develop employment and employability services that enable autistic people that are new to the organisation to access support and develop opportunities for existing students and service users, including the development of social enterprises, micro social enterprises and self-employment opportunities.

We will continue to grow the number of people accessing our support both in number and in geographic spread. This will include opening new or satellite services.

We will develop services that target autistic people with whom our contact is currently minimal and who are often isolated and find it difficult to find services that meet their needs. In particular we will develop services that offer social opportunities and advice and guidance for adults without a learning disability.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities and key financial performance indicators

Pandemic Response

This year has been a year like no other. Our primary objective throughout the year has been to continue to offer support while keeping services users, staff and families safe from the coronavirus pandemic. This work continues post year end. The impact of the changes due to coronavirus have been very significant on autistic people who have experienced high levels of anxiety and isolation across the UK.

In the initial stages of the pandemic, we sent home 92 staff who were assessed as being at higher risk from infection. This is nearly one quarter of our workforce.

As we were asked to run our day services remotely, we were able to re deploy some staff from these areas to support our accommodation-based services. We also redeployed staff from other areas of the organisation that had suspended services such as Employment Support and Respite. We are extremely grateful to staff for their flexibility and commitment during this period. We took advantage of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in order to pay staff sent home because of their underlying risk. We topped this up to 100% of salary so that no staff member was at financial loss. The opportunity to access the scheme enabled us to replace money lost from other income sources (such as fundraising).

At the time of product shortages in shops we used our bulk buying capabilities to provide food parcels to services, families and staff. Managers became briefly delivery drivers to ensure safe distribution.

Over time as the risks became better understood staff returned and we periodically maintained furlough for a small number of staff who were identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable, in line with Government assessed risk levels.

Our first priority from March 2020 was to safely maintain our accommodation-based services. For people using these services this is their permanent home. The challenges around accessing PPE were very significant and this became a full-time role for one of the Head Office Team. Another challenge was the ever-changing guidance from Government sources. The Leadership Team went to daily meetings to assess all areas of the situation and be as responsive as possible. Staff in service responded brilliantly with vigilance around cleaning and working in full PPE for long shifts.

Adults Services

Despite the challenges, we successfully moved the residents from Whitegates in Worksop to the £2million bespoke accommodation in Retford in August 2020. We are already seeing the massive impact this is having on the quality of life of the people who live in these homes. The new residential homes of South Lodge and Iedale mean that each individual has their own flat within the home with the benefit of communal spaces when they want a bit more company. Both homes offer great outside space.

We increased our Unplanned Care Provision at Ravenshead to 2 beds. This work enables us to support adults in crisis to stay away from more restrictive environments such as hospitals. The average stay is intended to be 12 weeks but during the pandemic was considerably longer. This is critical work and has been an expressed priority for AEM for some time.

Day support was moved to online where possible and where families were in need, we provided some face to face support in primarily empty buildings. Managers and staff maintained contact with families on a regular basis.

We reopened our Day Services as quickly and safely as we could. To accommodate increased numbers in Hamilton we started a 2-shift pattern. In all services there was strict adherence to bubbles and extremely rigorous cleaning regimes. This was not always easy as it meant a significant change in routines. However, it did mean that when people showed any symptoms at all, only a small number of people needed to remain at home.

Our Employment Service was impacted heavily by the pandemic. Despite this we were successful in tendering to work in partnership and now have ESF funding that sits along other funding streams. The post pandemic focus will be on ensuring that we re-engage job seekers that have been less visible during Covid19.

Children's Services

Sutherland House School remained open all year for children who needed to continue with a face to face education, either due to vulnerability or because of being the child of a key worker. Other students were provided with an online education. Staff learned how to use new technology very quickly and there were some very creative and engaging lessons delivered. The school remained open during Easter and half term holidays to enable the children of key workers to remain on site.

Once we reopened fully referrals remained strong in school and during this period, we welcomed a number of new pupils as well as supporting the transitions of those returning students. As in adults' services, the school implemented bubbles and strict cleaning regimes. The new ways of working were very challenging for some of our students. The ongoing need to isolate, after contact with someone showing symptoms, had a significant impact on attendance for both staff and pupils. Staff offered in depth support to the small number of students who were very anxious about returning.

We continued our search for a building suitable to be a satellite school in the Derby area. This will be a very exciting 2021 project.

Our Family Support Hubs and our children's activities in Northampton developed a flexible model involving sessions on zoom. In between lockdowns we did lots of activities outdoors. Activities included everything from baking and woodwork to online gaming.

We recruited a new team at the Elizabeth Newson Centre this year. Dr Kate Arron and Dr Mark Hudson have rigorously reviewed both assessment methodology and processes and have ENC working flexibly to meet families' needs.

b. Investment policy and performance

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

c. Factors relevant to achieve objectives

Autism East Midlands aims to increase its support for people whose lives are affected by autism, whether this is for carers or people receiving direct support. We continue to engage with local employers and companies by providing training and awareness of autism to their staff.

Financial review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b. Financial risk management objectives and policies

Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking a wide range of savings.

c. Principal risks and uncertainties

While the CJRS and other financial support, such as infection control grants and coronavirus recovery grant from the National Lottery mean that we have seen a financially buoyant year, 2021 to 2022 is looking much harder. This is because the real losses of income will impact in the coming year as Day Services struggle to return to pre pandemic numbers.

The recruitment and retention of sufficient staff remains a critical factor for AEM as well as other social care providers. The post Brexit national shortage of staff means that there may be upward pressure on wages for us to be able to compete. Social care needs the much-heralded long term funding solution promised by the current Government, now more than ever.

These annual accounts show the pension deficit as a result of participation in the Local Government Pension Scheme. This is an £16.5m deficit as at 31 March 2021 following an estimated actuarial revaluation. The scheme was closed to new participants from April 2013 to limit the future liability. The way the scheme is funded changed in April 2014, and Autism East Midlands is now paying £115k per annum to contribute towards reducing the deficit.

d. Deficit

deficit of £4,045,688 (2020: £118,717) has been achieved in the year. This includes a decrease in restricted funds of £18,739 (2020: £83,127 reduction).

e. Principal funding

The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes local authorities, health authorities and the Education Funding Agency.

f. Material investments policy

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The company and the group is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic-spectrum disorder and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Method of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the company and the group is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and coopted under the terms of the Articles of Association.

c. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees' work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

d. Pay policy for senior staff

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 27 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day to day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of directors' expenses are disclosed in Note 10 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 27.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff. The directors benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain highcalibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

e. Organisational structure and decision making

During the year under review the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and non-residential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

f. Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

a. Future developments

Northampton

We have successfully tendered to be the care provider of a new 8 bedded supported living development in Northampton. This provides an opportunity to work in partnership with the Local Authority, CCG and Housing

Association. This will be our first Adults service in Northamptonshire and is due to be completed April 2021.

Whitegates

The former residential home in Worksop will be redeveloped in the coming year in order to expand our capacity for Respite Services and Unplanned Care.

Satellite School

We will continue with our efforts to develop a satellite school to meet the demand for places from Derby/ Derbyshire.

Information on fundraising practices

We have a small internal fundraising team that organise community events to raise awareness of autism in general and of the charity. In addition, the team make applications for grants and restricted funding. Although income from fundraising itself is less than 3% of the charity's revenue we are committed to ensuring we meet the standards of the Code of Fundraising Practice issued by the Fundraising Regulator, and to that end we are registered with the Regulator. In the financial year, we did not receive any complaints about fundraising activities. Our fundraising activities do not include the direct canvassing of any individuals.

Members' liability

The Members of the company and the group guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up.

Employee involvement and employment of the disabled

Autism East Midlands recognises the GMB Union. Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. We issued daily briefings at the height of the pandemic. The company and the group offer exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and has adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees.

The company and the group has implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of personnel matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are under-represented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and the group's offices.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

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

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 resources 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 Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company and the group's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable group and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The

Designated Trustees will propose a motion re-appointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

This report was approved by the Trustees, on and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Chair

Independent Auditors' Report

to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charity') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2021 set out on pages 14 to 39. 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 of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve 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 Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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.

Opinion 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 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Group Strategic Report.

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 group's and the parent 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 group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 Auditors' 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. Based on our understanding of the charitable company and industry, we identify the key laws and regulations affecting the charitable company. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

We identified that the principal risk of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations related to:

- Management bias in respect of accounting estimates and judgements made;
- Management override of control;
- Posting of unusual journals or transactions

We focussed on those areas that could give rise to a material misstatement in the charitable company's financial statements. Our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims, including instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance where available;
- Reviewing legal expenditure in the year to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias. In particular; defined benefit pension liabilities.

It is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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 Auditors' Report.

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, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' 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 and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sarah Flear (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of

PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
2 Lace Market Square
Nottingham
NG1 1PB

PKF Smith Cooper Audit Limited are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 March 2021

		Unrestricted Funds 2021	Restricted Funds 2021	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
	Note	£	£	£	£
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	2	341,428	134,644	476,072	267,658
Charitable activities	5	2,114,979		2,114,979	2,385,928
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	9,832,935		9,832,935	9,323,767
Investments	4	104		104	478
Other Income	6	186,883		186,883	66,629
TOTAL INCOME		**12,476,329**	**134,644**	**12,610,973**	**12,044,460**
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	8,686,321		8,686,321	8,330,774
Charitable activities	7	3,007,957	147,383	3,155,340	3,155,969
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**11,694,278**	**147,383**	**11,841,661**	**11,486,743**
NET INCOME /(EXPENDITURE) BEFORE TRANSFERS		**782,051**	**(12,739)**	**769,312**	**557,717**
Transfers between Funds	20	6,000	(6,000)		
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE) BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES		**788,051**	**(18,739)**	**769,312**	**557,717**
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	25	(4,815,000)		(4,815,000)	(439,000)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**(4,026,949)**	**(18,739)**	**(4,045,688)**	**118,717**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		(4,256,737)	128,403	(4,128,334)	(4,247,051)
Prior year adjustment (Note 28)					
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**(8,283,686)**	**109,664**	**(8,174,022)**	**(4,128,334)**

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf, by:
G J Smith, Chair

The notes on pages 45 to 61 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2021

			2021		2020
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14		6,676,529		6,887,485
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	17	521,569		1,098,191	
Cash at bank and in hand	23	4,482,266		3,032,872	
		5,003,835		**4,131,063**	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(1,606,602)		(1,527,952)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**3,397,233**		**2,603,111**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**10,073,762**		**9,490,596**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		(1,779,784)		(2,243,930)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**8,293,978**		**7,246,666**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	25		(16,468,000)		(11,375,000)
NET LIABILITIES INCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**(8,174,022)**		**(4,128,334)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	20		109,664		128,403
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability		8,184,314		7,118,263	
Pension reserve		(16,468,000)		(11,375,000)	
Total unrestricted funds			(8,283,686)		(4,256,737)
TOTAL DEFICIT			**(8,174,022)**		**(4,128,334)**

Company Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2021

			2021		2020
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14		6,676,529		6,887,485
Investments	15		6		6
			6,676,535		6,887,491
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	17	3,753,725		3,346,570	
Cash at bank	23	1,074,725		676,180	
		4,828,450		4,022,750	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(1,431,271)**		**(1,419,694)**	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			**3,397,179**		**2,603,056**
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			**10,073,714**		**9,490,547**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		(1,779,784)		(2,243,930)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**8,293,930**		**7,246,617**
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	25		(16,468,000)		(11,375,000)
NET LIABILITIES INCLUDING PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES			**(8,174,070)**		**(4,128,383)**
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds			109,664		128,403
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability		8,184,266		7,118,214	
Pension reserve		(16,468,000)		(11,375,000)	
Total unrestricted funds			(8,283,734)		(4,256,786)
TOTAL DEFICIT			**(8,174,070)**		**(4,128,383)**

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2021

		2021	2020
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	22	1,720,799	1,663,323
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		2,886	800
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(274,290)	(1,463,500)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES		**(271,405)**	**(1,462,700)**
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		**1,449,394**	**200,623**
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		**3,032,872**	**2,832,249**
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS CARRIED FORWARD	23	4,482,266	3,032,872

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England within the United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is given in the company information of these financial statements. The company's registration number is 2053860.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The directors note that events surrounding the Covid 19 pandemic have introduced additional risks for many companies. The directors remain confident that the company is well placed to mitigate any additional risks arising and that Covid 19 will not adversely affect the ongoing viability of the company.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company.

The significant accounting policies have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The company has taken advantage of the exemption contained within section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 not to present its own Income and Expenditure Account.

For the year ended 31 March 2021 the company generated a surplus of £313,165 (2020: £557,717).

1.3 Company status

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the company which is the amount the company would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

1.7 Expenditure

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Costs of generating funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are costs incurred on the company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

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

- Costs of raising funds
- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold property	-	2% Straight Line
Freehold refurbishment	-	5%-33% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	25%-35% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulation are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.9 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.10 Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1993 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

1.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.13 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.14 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.15 Government grants

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance-related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

1.16 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

1.17 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the Trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and the interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

The pension charge for the defined benefit pension scheme is based on a full actuarial valuation dated 31 March 2021.

1.18 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

1.19 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Group has a present obligation that arises as a consequence of a past event; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle that obligation and the obligation can be reliably estimated. The provisions are measured as the estimated expenditure that will be required to settle such obligations as at the statement of financial position date. Discounting to present value is employed in the estimation process when the effect of the time value of money is material.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Donations	341,428	134,644	476,072	267,658
Total 2020	*114,952*	*152,706*	*267,658*	

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of the results pre-distribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £637,688 (2020 - £438,027). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £508,926, (2020 - £554,966).

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
INCOME				
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income	4,153,604		4,153,604	*3,488,461*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income	5,679,331		5,679,331	*5,835,306*
	9,832,935		9,832,935	*9,323,767*
EXPENSES				
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses	3,515,916		3,515,916	*3,050,434*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses	5,170,405		5,170,405	*5,280,340*
	8,686,321		8,686,321	*8,330,774*
Net income from subsidiary undertakings	**1,146,614**		**1,146,614**	***992,993***

	2021 £	*2020 £*
CURRENT ASSETS OF THE SUBSIDIARIES WERE:		
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	3,029,599	*2,120,176*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	537,104	*1,124,817*
CURRENT LIABILITIES OF THE SUBSIDIARIES WERE:		
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	(3,029,548)	*(2,120,125)*
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	(537,101)	*(1,124,814)*
Total	**54**	***54***

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Bank interest	104		104	*478*
Total 2020	*478*		*478*	

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	2,114,979		2,114,979	*2,385,928*
Total 2020	*2,385,928*		*2,385,928*	

6. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Other income	36,883		36,883	*66,629*
Subtotal	*36,883*		*36,883*	*66,629*
Corona, Virus Job retention scheme	150,000		150,000	
	186,883		**186,883**	***66,629***
Total 2020	*66,629*		*66,629*	

7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021	*Total funds 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	2,915,786	147,383	3,063,169	*3,046,481*
Fundraising	92,171		92,171	*109,488*
	3,007,957	147,383	3,155,340	*3,155,969*
Total 2020	*3,092,390*	*63,579*	*3,155,969*	

Summary by expenditure type

	Staff costs 2021	Depreciation 2021	Other costs 2021	Total 2021	*Total 2020*
	£	£	£	£	*£*
Provision of services	8,695,351	485,246	(6,117,428)	3,063,169	*3,046,481*
Fundraising	86,147		6,024	92,171	*109,488*
	8,781,498	485,246	(6,111,404)	3,155,340	*3,155,969*

8. CHARITABLE ACTIVITY EXPENDITURE

	Provision of services	Fundraising	Total 2021	*Total 2020*
	£	£	£	*£*
Pension interest and admin charges	271,000		271,000	*260,000*
Recruitment and training	41,320		41,320	*46,840*
Premises and equipment	736,893		736,893	*566,216*
Direct costs	540,288	6,024	546,312	*808,462*
Travel and transport	215,289		215,289	*317,810*
Legal and professional	123,330		123,330	*111,313*
Other costs	581,809		581,809	*430,085*
Bank loans and overdraft	71,036		71,036	*95,705*
Bad debt	45,360		45,360	*14,051*
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(8,764,543)		(8,764,543)	*(8,328,693)*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	(2,885)		(2,885)	*(800)*
Governance costs	23,577		23,577	*22,009*
Wages and salaries	7,440,509	76,382	7,516,891	*7,236,655*
National insurance	583,796	7,331	591,127	*565,171*
Pension cost	671,046	2,434	673,480	*648,483*
Depreciation	485,344		485,344	*362,662*
Total	**3,063,169**	**92,171**	**3,155,340**	*3,155,969*

Support costs have not been separately allocated and disclosed as the Directors believe they are immaterial to the financial statements.

9. ANALYSIS OF GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2021	*2020*
	£	*£*
Legal and professional fees	23,577	*22,009*

10. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021	*2020*
	£	*£*
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets:		
- owned by the charitable group	485,246	368,662
(Profit)/loss on disposal of assets	(2,885)	(800)
Operating lease rentals	145,581	150,660

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration (2020 - £NIL).
During the year, no Trustees received any benefits in kind (2020 - £NIL).
During the year, 1 Trustee received reimbursement of expenses totalling £70 (2020 - £Nil).

11. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2021	*2020*
	£	*£*
Fees payable to the company's auditor and its associates for the audit of the company's annual accounts	17,500	17,150
Fees payable to the company's auditor and its associates in respect of:		
Taxation compliance services	1,025	1,000

12. STAFF COSTS

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021	*2020*
	£	*£*
Wages and salaries	7,516,891	*7,236,655*
Social security costs	591,127	*565,171*
Other pension costs (Note 25)	673,480	*648,483*
	8,781,498	*8,450,309*

The average number of persons employed by the company during the year was as follows:

	2021	*2020*
	No.	*No.*
Teaching staff	92	*92*
Care staff	281	*298*
Management and administration	38	*38*
	411	*428*

The number of higher paid employees was:

	2021	*2020*
	No.	*No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	1	*2*
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	*1*
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	*0*
In the band £100,001 - £200,000	1	*1*

13. OTHER FINANCE INCOME

	2021	*2020*
	£	*£*
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	(264,000)	*(252,000)*

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property and refurbs	Vehicles & equipment	Leasehold improvements	Total
Group and Company Cost	£	£	£	£
At 1 April 2020	8,671,649	703,755	257,448	9,632,852
Additions	100,680	173,610		274,290
Disposals		(30,750)		(30,750)
At 31 March 2021	8,772,329	846,615	257,448	9,876,392
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2020	2,034,000	453,919	257,448	2,745,367
Charge for the year	362,886	122,360		485,246
On disposals		(30,750)		(30,750)
At 31 March 2021	2,396,886	545,529	257,448	3,199,863
Net book value				
At 31 March 2021	6,375,443	301,086		6,676,529
At 31 March 2020	*6,637,649*	*249,836*		*6,887,485*

15. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Shares in group undertakings
Company	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	6

16. PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARIES

NORSACA (TRADING) LIMITED	
Subsidiary name	**Norsaca (Trading) Limited**
Company registration number	08056114
Basis of control	Equity - share capital
Equity shareholding %	100%
Total assets as at 31 March 2021	£ 537,104
Total liabilities as at 31 March 2021	£ (537,101)
Total equity as at 31 March 2021	£3
Turnover for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 5,679,331
Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 5,170,405
Profit for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 508,926

16. PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARIES

SUTHERLAND HOUSE (TRADING) LIMITED	
Subsidiary name	**Sutherland House (Trading) Limited**
Company registration number	03381476
Basis of control	Equity - share capital
Equity shareholding %	100%
Total assets as at 31 March 2021	£ 3,029,599
Total liabilities as at 31 March 2021	£ (3,029,548)
Total equity as at 31 March 2021	£51
Turnover for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 4,153,604
Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 3,515,916
Profit for the year ended 31 March 2021	£ 637,688

17. DEBTORS

		Group		Company
	2021	*2020*	**2021**	*2020*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Trade debtors	**420,020**	*1,014,607*	**128,564**	*153,553*
Amounts owed by group undertakings			**3,523,612**	*3,136,681*
Other debtors	**10,080**	*10,850*	**10,080**	*10,850*
Prepayments and accrued income	**91,469**	*72,734*	**91,469**	*45,486*
	521,569	*1,098,191*	**3,753,725**	*3,346,570*

18. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2021	*2020*	**2021**	*2020*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Bank loans and overdrafts	**134,561**	*153,353*	**134,561**	*153,353*
Trade creditors	**279,567**	*282,073*	**279,567**	*282,073*
Other taxation and social security	**577,128**	*605,187*	**577,128**	*605,187*
Other creditors	**282,627**	*217,875*	**123,076**	*109,617*
Accruals and deferred income	**332,719**	*269,464*	**316,939**	*269,464*
	1,606,602	*1,527,952*	**1,431,271**	*1,419,694*

		Group		Company
	2021	**2020**	**2021**	**2020**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
DEFERRED INCOME				
Deferred income brought forward		**1,083**		**1,083**
Amounts released from previous years		**(1,083)**		**(1,083)**
Deferred income carried forward				

19. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

		Group		Company
	2021	*2020*	**2021**	*2020*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Bank loans	**1,779,784**	*2,243,930*	**1,779,784**	*2,243,930*

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

		Group		Company
	2021	*2020*	**2021**	*2020*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Between one and two years				
Bank loans Between two and five years	**138,275**	*162,068*	**138,275**	*162,068*
Bank loans Between two and five years	**439,354**	*517,778*	**439,354**	*517,778*
Bank loans	**1,202,155**	*1,564,084*	**1,202,155**	*1,564,084*

Creditors include amounts not wholly repayable within 5 years as follows:

		Group		Company
	2021	*2020*	**2021**	*2020*
	£	*£*	**£**	*£*
Repayable by instalments	**1,202,155**	*1,564,084*	**1,202,155**	*1,564,084*

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% and repayments are repayable monthly.

20. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Fund	7,118,215	2,643,394	(2,729,957)	1,152,614		8,184,266
Reserves - subsidiaries	48	9,832,935	(8,686,321)	(1,146,614)		48
Pension reserve	(11,375,000)		(278,000)		(4,815,000)	(16,468,000)
	(4,256,737)	**12,476,329**	**(11,694,278)**	**6,000**	**(4,815,000)**	**(8,283,686)**
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7,698					7,698
Jones Trust	29,498			(6,000)		23,498
Wilson Foundation	16,000					16,000
Lottery - Autism Family						
Support Hubs	40,172	87,999	(73,086)			55,085
Children in Need	26,645	6,993	(29,150)			4,488
Building Better Opportunities	8,390	16,902	(22,397)			2,895
Children in Need 2		2,750	(2,750)			
Nottingham Community						
Foundation		10,000	(10,000)			
Hobson Charity		10,000	(10,000)			
	128,403	**134,644**	**(147,383)**	**(6,000)**		**109,664**
Total of funds	**(4,128,334)**	**12,610,973**	**(11,841,661)**		**(4,815,000)**	**(8,174,022)**

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a program to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs - fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation – this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Building Better Opportunities – this fund allows us to support adults to make progress towards employment, training or volunteering.

Jones Trust - The Jones Trust made a contribution towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school. This donation has been fully spent but the income is being released to the Statement of Financial Activities in line with the depreciation charged on the assets acquired.

Children in Need - Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton - a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

20. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Designated Funds	421,374			(421,374)		
GENERAL FUNDS						
General Fund	5,966,251	2,567,987	(2,836,390)	1,420,367		7,118,215
Reserves- subsidiary	48	9,323,767	(8,330,774)	(992,993)		48
Pension reserve	(10,680,000)		(256,000)		(439,000)	(11,375,000)
	(4,713,701)	**11,891,754**	**(11,423,164)**	**427,374**	**(439,000)**	**(4,256,737)**
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7,878		(180)			7,698
Jones Trust	35,498			(6,000)		29,498
Sherwood Centre	1,900		(1,900)			
Wilson Foundation		20,000	(4,000)			16,000
Lottery - Autism Family						
Support Hubs		88,286	(48,114)			40,172
Children in Need		27,972	(1,327)			26,645
Building Better Opportunities		16,448	(8,058)			8,390
	45,276	**152,706**	**(63,579)**	**(6,000)**		**128,403**
Total of funds	**(4,247,051)**	**12,044,460**	**(11,486,743)**		**(439,000)**	**(4,128,334)**

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds	(4,256,737)	12,476,329	(11,694,278)	6,000	(4,815,000)	(8,283,686)
	(4,256,737)	**12,476,329**	**(11,694,278)**	**6,000**	**(4,815,000)**	**(8,283,686)**
Restricted funds	128,403	134,644	(147,383)	(6,000)		109,664
	(4,128,334)	**12,610,973**	**(11,841,661)**		**(4,815,000)**	**(8,174,022)**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Designated Funds	421,374			(421,374)		
General Funds	(4,713,701)	11,891,754	(11,423,164)	427,374	(439,000)	(4,256,737)
	(4,292,327)	**11,891,754**	**(11,423,164)**	**6,000**	**(439,000)**	**(4,256,737)**
Restricted funds	45,276	152,706	(63,579)	(6,000)		128,403
	(4,247,051)	**12,044,460**	**(11,486,743)**		**(439,000)**	**(4,128,334)**

21. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total funds 2021
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	6,653,031	23,498	6,676,529
Current assets	4,917,669	86,166	5,003,835
Creditors due within one year	(1,606,602)		(1,606,602)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,779,784)		(1,779,784)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(16,468,000)		(16,468,000)
	(8,283,686)	**109,664**	**(8,174,022)**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total funds 2020
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	6,857,988	29,498	6,887,486
Current assets	4,032,157	98,905	4,131,062
Creditors due within one year	(1,527,952)		(1,527,952)
Creditors due in more than one year	(2,243,930)		(2,243,930)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(11,375,000)		(11,375,000)
	(4,256,737)	**128,403**	**(4,128,335)**

22. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

		Group
	2021	2020
	£	£
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**769,312**	*557,717*
ADJUSTMENT FOR:		
Depreciation charges	**485,246**	*368,663*
Profit on the sale of fixed assets	**(2,885)**	*(800)*
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**576,622**	*(253,438)*
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	**(385,496)**	*735,181*
FRS102 pension adjustments	**278,000**	*256,000*
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**1,720,799**	*1,663,323*

23. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

		Group		Company
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Cash in hand	**4,482,266**	*3,032,872*	**1,074,725**	*676,180*
TOTAL	**4,482,266**	*3,032,872*	**1,074,725**	*676,180*

24. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2021 the group and company had capital commitments as follows:

		Group		Company
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Contracted for but not provided in these financial statements	**575,000**	*54,230*	**575,000**	*54,230*

25. PENSION COMMITMENTS

Retirement benefits to employees of the group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Society in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and the interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credits adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses. Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages) :

	2021	2020
Discount rate at 31 March	**2.00%**	2.35%
Future salary increases	**2.85%**	1.85%
Future pension increases	**2.85%**	1.85%
Inflation assumption (RPI)	**3.20%**	2.65%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	**2.85%**	1.85%

	At 31 March 2021	At 31 March 2020
Sensitivity analysis (applied to gross defined benefit liability)	**£**	£
Discount rate +0.1%	**36,044,000**	27,789,000
Discount rate -0.1%	**37,634,000**	29,011,000
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	**38,450,000**	29,397,000
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	**35,279,000**	27,424,000
Adjustment to pension increases +0.1%	**37,586,000**	28,984,000
Adjustment to pension increases -0.1%	**36,090,000**	27,815,000

The assets in the scheme and the expected rates of return were:

	Fair value at 31 March 2021	Fair value at 31 March 2019
	£	£
Equities	**12,972,000**	10,882,000
Gilts	**721,000**	560,000
Other bonds	**1,522,000**	1,476,000
Property	**2,160,000**	2,161,000
Cash	**1,089,000**	416,000
Other	**1,898,000**	1,523,000
Total market value of assets	**20,362,000**	17,018,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £3,705,000 (2020: - £1,725,000).

25. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Current service cost	**(285,000)**	(325,000)
Interest on obligation	**(264,000)**	(252,000)
Past service cost	**(23,000)**	
Admin expenses	**(7,000)**	(8,000)
Total	**(579,000)**	(585,000)
Actual return on scheme assets	**(3,705,000)**	(1,725,000)

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Opening defined benefit obligation	**28,393,000**	29,731,000
Current service cost	**285,000**	325,000
Interest cost	**660,000**	707,000
Contributions by scheme participants	**48,000**	53,000
Actuarial losses/(gains)	**8,124,000**	(1,830,000)
Past service costs	**23,000**	
Estimated Benefits paid net of transfers	**(703,000)**	(593,000)
Closing defined benefit obligation	**36,830,000**	28,393,000

Changes in the fair value of scheme assets were as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Opening fair value of scheme assets	**17,018,000**	19,051,000
Interest income	**396,000**	455,000
Actuarial gains and (losses)	**3,309,000**	(2,269,000)
Admin expenses	**(7,000)**	(8,000)
Contributions by employer	**301,000**	329,000
Contributions by scheme participants	**48,000**	53,000
Estimated Benefits paid net of transfers	**(703,000)**	(593,000)
	20,362,000	17,018,000

25. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

The major categories of scheme assets as a percentage of total scheme assets are as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Equities	**64.00%**	64.00%
Gilts	**4.00%**	3.00%
Other bonds	**7.00%**	9.00%
Property	**11.00%**	13.00%
Cash	**5.00%**	2.00%
Other	**9.00%**	9.00%

Amounts for the current and previous period are as follows:

Defined benefit pension schemes

	2021	2020
	£	£
Defined benefit obligation	**(36,830,000)**	(28,393,000)
Scheme assets	**20,362,000**	17,018,000
Deficit	**(16,468,000)**	(11,375,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets	**3,309,000**	(2,269,000)

26. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2021 the total of the group's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2021	2020
GROUP AND COMPANY	£	£
AMOUNTS PAYABLE:		
Within 1 year	**77,644**	100,004
Between 1 and 5 years	**249,064**	124,692
After more than 5 years	**49,372**	
Total	**376,080**	224,696

27. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There were no related party transactions in the year ended 31 March 2021 (2020 - none).

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, Finance Director and Headteacher. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £362,696 (2020 - £362,697) for short term employment benefits and £28,396.12 (2020: £25,393) for post-employment benefits.





AEM Autism East Midlands

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