

A2B

**Report of the Trustees and
Accounts for the Year to 31 March 2020**

**for
AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1168468

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

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for the Year to 31 March 2020

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AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

Report of the Trustees **for the Year to 31 March 2020**

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the period ending 31 March 2020. This report is presented in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The Accounts are prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1168468

Principal address

Elm House
Drinkstone Road
Hessett
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP30 9AU

Trustees

The charity trustees are appointed as and when appropriate by the body of trustees in office. The trustees who served during the period and those currently in office are:

Dr Sam Whitmarsh	Chairperson
Mr David Ayrton	Treasurer
Mrs Nicola Davies	Secretary
Ms Tracey Bishop	
Mr Andrew Davies	
Mr Paul Heffer	

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed according to the Constitution dated 11th November 2015.

The overall management and control of the charity rests with the individual members of the Board of Trustees.

The charity trustees meet in accordance with the Constitution which requires the presence of at least two or, if greater, a third of its members to form a quorum. The Board may appoint a Chairperson and revoke such appointment at any time. All business is decided by a simple majority, each trustee having one vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Charity trustees are elected to the body of trustees by a resolution at a properly convened meeting and serve for a term of three years. Trustees retiring at the end of their term are eligible for reappointment. In selecting potential candidates for appointment as trustee, the charity trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience of individuals to ensure their suitability to administer the CIO.

There shall be a minimum of 3 trustees and there is no maximum. There are currently 6 trustees.

Voluntary staff

The charity benefits from the services provided by volunteers. Voluntary help is not valued for the purposes of the financial statements.

Other advisors

Bank: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: Derek Gadd, 30 Conyers Way, Great Barton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2SW

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

Report of the Trustees for the Year to 31 March 2020

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The trustees have in place policies addressing the main operational risk areas, including that regarding data protection, and they aim to use best practice. An appropriate level of funds will be maintained to help mitigate the main financial risks.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

A2B is an organisation that works to 'Lift Dignity and Restore Hope' amongst the most vulnerable members of society in Albania. By meeting both immediate and longer term need through a range of activities in Health, Education, Livelihoods and Protection, we aim to help people lift themselves out of the cycle of poverty.

A2B is based on Christian values and principles, believing that true human development seeks to address all areas of a person's life, physically, economically, emotionally and spiritually.

The trustees declare that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities - legal

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation was set up to take forward the work of Aid to the Balkans Forward Trust (A2B), which operated as an unincorporated charity (Registered with the Charity Commission 1077088) since 1999.

On 1 April 2017 the assets of the old charity were transferred to this new body and it started to operate from that date.

Charitable activities – operational

AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) continues to solely fund A2B Albania, our partner charity based in Albania. A2B Albania continues to grow in partnership with other organisations and we are hugely grateful for the support of: ABC clinic, Amos mission, Foodbank Albania, FSCI, Paul Ritzau Foundation, Passi and Beyond, St Mensenkinderen, Swedish consulate and YWAM. Many of the projects would not be viable without partial or full support from these partners. AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) are the largest partner to A2B Albania and collaborate with these organisations through A2B Albania in a range of projects as described in this report.

AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) continue our fundraising and marketing support of A2B Albania, raising awareness of projects and sharing the amazing work which helps around 500 vulnerable and impoverished people each week. This takes the form of electronic and written communication to our donor base along with presentations and potential partner organisations – typically church groups. AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) also provide strategic oversight when considering new projects and UK trustees travelled to Albania on 3 occasions in 2019/2020 to visit the work in Albania. AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) board remains the same as 2018/2019.

A2B celebrated its 20th Anniversary in 2019 with events in Albania and the UK, the charity has grown from emergency support in response to the Kosovan refugee crisis providing food operating out of a small kitchen to a charity impacting the lives of 500 people each week delivering education, training, mentorship and advocacy alongside emergency and practical support, with around 20 staff and connections to 8 countries worldwide. Both A2B Albania and AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) are hugely grateful to our supporters, staff and volunteers for partnering together to make A2B what it is today. We give thanks to our God, who constantly provides for the needs of people in poverty in Albania.

The 2019/2020 year was dominated by 2 natural disasters in Albania. The first, a 6.4-magnitude earthquake occurred in

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Report of the Trustees for the Year to 31 March 2020

November 2019 and was Albania's most deadly earthquake in 99 years. In total 51 people were killed and over 3,000 injured with countless more homes damaged and estimates of 20,000 people left homeless. The country was plagued with over 1,300 aftershocks that continued into January 2020. The epicentre of the earthquake was around the port city of Durrës and surrounding villages. A2B responded in collaboration with the Albanian Evangelical Alliance working with the Good Seed Church in Vore providing food, temporary shelter, hygiene products and other items such as mattresses and clothes for distribution. Additional support has been made to poor families who have lost homes to provide building materials and items of furniture such as beds which were damaged in the disaster.

The second disaster was caused by the covid-19 pandemic. Many low paid workers in Albania are not salaried, but rather paid for each day they work. As national curfew was introduced, these workers could not earn a wage. For those poorer families, without savings to fall back on, the curfew was particularly difficult. The local government in Elbasan approached A2B to help and in collaboration with churches from the UK, Amos mission – a German charity -, FoodBank Albania and the local government, A2B have coordinated and provided food, medicines, clothes, beds and shoes to thousands of people who would otherwise be struggling. The pandemic closed almost all of the A2B projects in operation, but the staff were redeployed to help with the organisation and distribution of aid to those in Elbasan and the surrounding villages.

Outside of the emergency support that A2B provided to both natural disasters in Albania, an additional second hand car – an Opel 7 (called Vauxhall Zafira in the UK) was purchased to support the growing number of staff and diversity of projects that A2B Albania are operating. A new project was established in collaboration with "Sewing for hope USA" where 11 women attend a 3 month course with 20-25 hours training each week. These women have all become passionate and skilled seamstresses. Each participant received a sewing machine at the end of the course and many have plans to start their own businesses. Teuta, one of the participants, said "I hope that in the future I can start to work in a private tailoring company and so I provide a steady income for my family". This sort of training and gift of equipment provides a long-lasting opportunity for employment and could provide a sustainable income for a whole family for years.

The established project portfolio constitutes the bulk of AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) support in Albania. A2B Albania run:

- 3 kindergarten projects educating around 50 preschool children (to age 7) mostly from Roma backgrounds. The Hope for the future (H4F) project was 4 years old in Feb 2020 and acts as one of the major hubs for A2B activities.
- 3 day centres, which provide a main meal for around 200 people each day, act as social and support centres for elderly people and provide afterschool clubs to around 80 children who struggle to receive help with homework at home. These centres act as hubs for additional activities, for example: Hygiene training, free health checks and advice for the elderly – provided by ABC clinic -, adult learning and community events celebrating e.g. Christmas, Easter, national holidays.
- The family link project connects sponsors in the UK to 35 families in Albania who are in desperate need. Regular food parcels and financial support for rent, medical or educational needs are provided to families that could not survive without it. Most of these families have suffered traumatic experiences or are destitute following the departure of the breadwinner through death or family breakdown. Many are referred to A2B by local government social services, and A2B work with social services to ensure the families receive benefits they are entitled to.
- The House of Opportunity project supports vulnerable young adults often at risk of trafficking as they transition from the state care system to adult life. Life skills, counselling and employment advice are provided along with safe accommodation and an onsite house parent.
- In the summer months A2B ran 3 weeks of children's camps. Over 300 children attended receiving nutritious food and getting involved in games, craft and other activities. Often these activities inspire the children to dream and imagine a positive future for themselves, providing hope and encouraging children to take advantage of the educational and other opportunities that they are presented with.
- Foodbank. A2B act as the hub for Foodbank Albania in Elbasan, one staff member administers the project, raising awareness of poverty in schools and collecting and distributing food to those that need it.
- "Our friend the policeman" is a collaboration with the police in Elbasan and is sponsored by the Swedish government. This is the second year of this project and aims to build partnerships between the police and young people. The police use the kindergarten and day centre networks that A2B have built up to connect with children and parents to share information about the risks and damage caused by trafficking, bullying and violence and what

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

Report of the Trustees for the Year to 31 March 2020

to do if there is concern. It has proven an effective way to build trust between the police and community.

In addition to these main projects, various smaller activities are undertaken, often bringing in other organisations to provide a service or advice e.g. medical care for the elderly, support groups lead by social services discussing abuse or serious health conditions. Other activities involve bringing the different generations together, e.g. summer barbeques, coordination of volunteers to help decorate or tidy up a client house.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) is a grant funding organisation to its partner charity in Albania, A2B Albania; this has been the case for the whole of the year to 31 March 2020.

Significantly, giving and other income received to fund A2B's work increased by over 34% during the year. The Charity has benefitted from some particularly generous one-off gifts and a very encouraging response to the Earthquake recovery appeal. Gift Aid tax relief is an important element of the Charity's income, and the amount received during the year, £7,329 represents 8% of total donations (2019: 10%).

Grant funding this year to A2B Albania has increased by nearly 49% overall at £103,183 (2019: £69,330) including some £51,894 granted for specific purposes, notably the Earthquake response appeal. Sterling exchange rate against the Albanian Lek has remained reasonably stable during the year providing for a more consistent level of funding for the Bread of Life Centre and Family Link programme. A2B UK have met the Charity's core funding commitment to A2B Albania.

Giving to the Family Link programme and associated family support amounted to £19,849 (inclusive of tax relief). Some £6,725 was also received to part fund Another Life Centre in Pequin, Albania of which £600 was given specifically for the Kindergarten. Other appeals and restricted receipts included £12,497 given as a humanitarian response after the major earthquake in November 2019; £12,500 to support the House of Opportunity youth refuge and £494 for a Summer camp and vehicle costs. The analysis of those funds is shown at note 5 to the accounts. All such giving is granted to A2B Albania, without deduction, the month after receipt.

There was an unrestricted fund deficit for the year of £4,880 and a restricted fund surplus of £171. At 31st March 2020, the Charity's funds comprised those on deposit in the UK, being £18,718. Of this, restricted funds comprised £1,735. No funds are in deficit.

Reserves policy

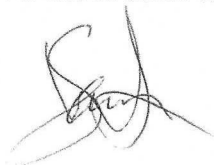
The trustees' policy on reserves is to maintain cash and bank deposits sufficient to meet short term requirements. At 31st March 2020, the unrestricted fund balance covered just over 4.5 month's average core funding grant to A2B Albania.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Charity legislation requires trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year. The trustees are also responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records, for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees declare that they approved the Trustees Report on ____ 17th December ____ 2020.

For and on behalf of the Board of Trustees:



Dr Sam Whitmarsh - Chairman
Trustee

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Aid to The Balkans UK (A2B) (Charity no. 1168468)

I report on the accounts of Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) for the year ended 31 March 2020, which are set out on pages 6 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Derek Gadd

30 Conyers Way,
Gt. Barton
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP31 2SW

Date: 22nd December 2020

Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) (registered charity no. 1168468)
Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets
For the year ended 31 March 2020

		2020			2019
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds -note 5 £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Receipts					
<i>Voluntary income</i>					
Donations and gifts received in the UK		43,338	48,827	92,165	67,098
<i>Interest:</i>					
UK bank accounts		23	-	23	14
<i>Other income</i>					
Refund of Income Tax (Gift Aid)		4,091	3,238	7,329	6,822
Total receipts		47,452	52,065	99,517	73,934
Payments					
<i>Direct charitable expenditure</i>					
Grant funding	2	51,289	51,894	103,183	69,330
<i>Other administrative expenses in UK</i>					
Bank charges		300	-	300	300
Fund raising & promotional costs		103	-	103	18
Travel expenses		640	-	640	-
Stationery, printing & postage (UK overhead)		-	-	-	173
		1,043	-	1,043	491
Total payments		52,332	51,894	104,226	69,821
Net (payments)/receipts after transfers		(4,880)	171	(4,709)	4,113
Reconciliation of fund balances					
Total balances brought forward at 1st April 2019		21,863	1,564	23,427	19,314
Net (payments)/receipts after transfers		(4,880)	171	(4,709)	4,113
Fund balances carried forward at 31st March 2020		16,983	1,735	18,718	23,427
Statement of assets					
UK bank balances		16,983	1,735	18,718	23,427
Total Charity funds at 31st March 2020				18,718	23,427

The accounts and notes on pages 6 to 8 were approved on 22nd December 2020 and signed on behalf of the trustees by:



Mr D Ayrton
Trustee

Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) (registered charity no. 1168468)

Notes to Receipts and Payments Account

For the year ended 31 March 2020

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting basis

The accounts, including notes thereto, show all funds which are governed by the Charity presented on a cash received and paid basis. The accounts are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

The statement of receipts and payments show donated income received and expenditure incurred in the UK. The Trustees do not have operational oversight of the overseas charity, A2B Albania

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for specified purposes within the objects of the charity.

Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements, where applicable.

Gift Aid tax refunds are apportioned across funds on an actual basis in accordance with underlying gift aid income. All costs are UK administrative costs and are allocated to the general fund.

2. GRANT FUNDING

The trustees do not directly oversee the operational management of charitable activities in Albania having fully ceded the responsibility to the trustees of the sister charity established in that country, A2B Albania.

A2B in the UK have pledged to continue to raise money and provide on-going grant funding for the core charitable activities and, grant funding shown in the Receipts & Payments account is made wholly to A2B Albania. That charity is subject to funding terms and conditions including reporting obligations to A2B UK. As part of their due diligence, the trustees receive six monthly reports from Albania and visit the projects to ensure monies are being expended in accordance with the purposes for which grants are made.

During the year core funding was £3,700 per month which helps to finance the Bread of life Centre covering staff and other direct costs. In addition, funding is provided through the Family Link programme and for other projects and specific appeals. The details are shown in note 5, restricted funds analysis.

Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) (registered charity no. 1168468)

Notes to Receipts and Payments Account

For the year ended 31 March 2020

3. GUARANTEES AND SECURED DEBTS

The trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012, that at year end the CIO did not have any outstanding guarantees to third parties nor any debts secured on assets of the CIO.

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

No trustee was paid remuneration during the year.

Travel and promotional expenses of £744 were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2019: nil).

Expenses incurred in the year were wholly operating costs within the Objects of the Charity.

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS ANALYSIS

	<i>At 1st April 2019</i>	Receipts	Expenses	Transfers	<i>At 31st March 2020</i>
	£	£	£	£	£
Family Link (including Gift Aid)	1,483	19,849	19,928	-	1,404
Another Life Centre - Peqin	-	6,125	5,844	-	281
Another Life - Kindergarten	81	600	631	-	50
Other specific appeals					
Earthquake appeal	-	12,497	12,497	-	-
House of Opportunity	-	12,500	12,500	-	-
Summer Camp	-	200	200	-	-
Vehicle appeal	-	294	294	-	-
	<u>1,564</u>	<u>52,065</u>	<u>51,894</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,735</u>

The **Family Link** programme supports and encourages financial and relational links between UK donors and families in need in Albania.

Another Life Centre at Peqin. Two streams of funding are received and granted to Albania; part funding for the Centre as a whole started after initial third party funding ceased; and, on-going support to help operate and staff a kindergarten; a place of safety and early education for local children.

Other specific gifts. Funding for particular operational needs identified by the managers of A2B Albania or A2B UK Trustees.

Earthquake appeal: Humanitarian response to the devastating earthquake that struck northwestern Albania on 26 November 2019.

House of Opportunity: Anonymous gift received for the refuge established for young people, run by A2B Albania and mainly funded by a charitable foundation based in Bulgaria.

Summer Camp: Funding received for a children's summer camp.

Vehicle appeal: Funding to help with the Charity's vehicle running costs.