Report of the Trustees and
Accounts for the Year to 31 March 2021
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 2021

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AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

Report of the Trustees
for the Year to 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the period ending 31 March 2021. 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 Tracy 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 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, ME194JQ
Independent Examiner: Derek Gadd, 30 Conyers Way, Great Barton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2SW

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, Foodbank Albania, FSCI, Paul Ritzau Foundation, Passi and Beyond, St Mensenkinderen 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.

The 2020/2021 year was heavily affected by the covid pandemic with national curfew starting in March 2020. All day centre and kindergarten projects were closed according to government directive. The House of Opportunity and foodbank projects continued. Albania has significant informal economy with many paid cash in hand for a day's work. With the economy closed and these people unable earn a wage, an already vulnerable group were pushed further under the poverty line. A2B Albania mobilised the 21 strong team to purchase, pack and deliver food to those in need. On top of the 250 people that are regularly supported, 350 were added, more than doubling our food budget. Following various appeals, money from the UK and other countries was provided both directly to A2B Albania and via AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) to cover these costs along with coordination and distribution of medicines, clothes, beds and shoes to those in need.

Charitable activities cont.

Following this initial response, A2B Albania were selected by the local government to further support the local community with food provision and A2B staff were involved for the rest of the first lockdown.

A2B were able to continue provision of food support for all of our Kindergarten and Day centre clients through the rest of the year. Although day centres remained closed during the 2020-2021 financial year the kindergartens opened again under socially distanced conditions as did homework clubs and summer camps. Many of the children we support do not have access to computers at home and so could not access the online services schools were providing. So A2B used donated IT equipment from the Paul Ritzau Foundation to create "school from home" clubs (socially distanced) whilst schools were closed to support these children and allow them to continue learning.

Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic dominated the 2020/2021 year, the effects of the 6.4-magnitude earthquake from November 2019 were still being felt in the port city of Durrës and surrounding villages. When the Covid-19 restrictions were slightly relaxed during the autumn of 2020 A2B Albania were able to help families rebuild lives and literally rebuild homes as building materials were purchased and distributed to those still living in tents near their damaged homes.

The established project portfolio constitutes the bulk of AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) support in Albania. Although significantly disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic A2B Albania continued to operate the following projects in addition to the day centre and kindergarten projects already described:

- **The foodbank project** took on new priority during the covid-19 pandemic bringing in food for distribution to an even larger group of people than before. A2B act as the hub for Foodbank Albania in Elbasan, and one staff member administers the project.
- **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. Provision continued throughout the pandemic.
- **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. As a household, this project continued unaffected by the pandemic. The house parents staff leading the project changed during the year.
- In the summer months A2B ran 3 weeks of **children's camps**, the scale was much reduced over previous years due to social distancing and reduced staffing availability and only the neediest children were provided for. Food, games, craft and other activities aimed to show the children a brighter future for themselves, and encouraged children to take advantage of the educational and other opportunities that they are presented with.

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 2021.

Giving and other income received to fund A2B's work during the year amounted to £73,249, about the historic annual average, and a reduction of 26% compared to that in 2020. In 2020 the Charity benefitted from generous one-off gifts and a significant 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, £6,971 represents 11% of total donations (2020: 8%).

Grant funding this year to A2B Albania has decreased by 28% overall at £74,267 (2020: £103,183) including some £28,767 granted for specific purposes. 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 £15,926 (inclusive of tax relief). Some £3,650 was also received to part fund Another Life Centre in Pequin, Albania of which £100 was given specifically for the kindergarten. Other appeals and restricted receipts included £5,941 given as a humanitarian response to the effects of the covid-19 pandemic in Albania; £2,500 to support food distribution and £650 for medical expenses. 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 a unrestricted fund deficit for the year of £1,452 and a restricted fund surplus of £130. On 31st March 2021, the Charity's funds comprised those on deposit in the UK, being £17,396. Of this, restricted funds comprised £1,865. 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 2021, the unrestricted fund balance covered just under 4 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 27 January 2022.

For and on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Dr Sam Whitmarsh - Chairman
Trustee

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 2021, 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: 28th January 2022

Aid to the Balkans UK (A2B) (registered charity no. 1168468)
Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets
For the year ended 31 March 2021

		2021			2020
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds -note 5	Total funds	Total funds
Receipts	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	**£**	*£*
Voluntary income					
Donations and gifts received in the UK		42,960	23,312	**66,272**	*92,165*
Interest:					
UK bank accounts		6	-	**6**	*23*
Other income					
Refund of Income Tax (Gift Aid)		4,386	2,585	**6,971**	*7,329*
Total receipts		47,352	25,897	73,249	*99,517*
Payments					
Direct charitable expenditure					
Grant funding	2	45,500	28,767	**74,267**	*103,183*
Other administrative expenses in UK					
Bank charges		304	-	**304**	*300*
Fund raising & promotional costs		-	-	-	*103*
Travel expenses		-	-	-	*640*
		304	-	**304**	*1,043*
Total payments		45,804	28,767	74,571	*104,226*
Excess (payments)/receipts		**1,548**	**(2,870)**	**(1,322)**	*(4,709)*
Transfer between funds		(3,000)	3,000	-	-
Net (payments) after transfers		**(1,452)**	**130**	**(1,322)**	*(4,709)*
Reconciliation of fund balances					
Total balances brought forward at 1st April 2020		16,983	1,735	**18,718**	*23,427*
Net (payments) after transfers		(1,452)	130	(1,322)	*(4,709)*
Fund balances carried forward at 31st March 2021		**15,531**	**1,865**	**17,396**	*18,718*
Statement of assets					
UK bank balances		15,531	1,865	**17,396**	*18,718*
Total Charity funds at 31st March 2021				**17,396**	*18,718*

The accounts and notes on pages 6 to 8 were approved on 27 January 2022 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 2021

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 oversite 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 activates 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, when feasible, to ensure monies are being expended in accordance with the purposes for which grants are made.

During the year core funding was £3,800 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.

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.
No travel, promotional or other expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year *(2020: 744)*.
Expenses incurred in 2020 were wholly operating costs within the objects of the Charity.

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS ANALYSIS

	At 1st April 2020	Receipts	Expenses	Transfers	At 31st March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Family Link (including Gift Aid)	*1,404*	15,793	15,926	-	**1,271**
Another Life Centre - Peqin	*281*	3,963	3,650		**594**
Another Life - Kindergarten	*50*	50	100	-	-
Other specific appeals					
Covid-19 Appeal	-	5,941	5,941		-
Medical & personal costs	-	150	650	500	-
Food parcels - covid appeal	-	-	2,500	2,500	-
	1,735	25,897	28,767	3,000	**1,865**

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. The funding for the kindergarten project ceased during the year.

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

Covid appeal: Humanitarian response to the pandemic in Albania in 2020.

Medical costs: Funding for medical costs of one of the project managers.

Food parcels: One-off uplift in funding to help with the Charity's distribution of food and supplies during the covid crisis.