



Autism Dogs Charity
Specialist trained dogs for autistic people

Autism Dogs Charity
Trustees' Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2022

Registered Charity number 1199343

**Autism Dogs Charity
Trustees' Report and Financial Statements
31 December 2022**

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Autism Dogs Charity Trustees' Report and Financial Statements 31 December 2022

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees

Nominated Trustees - 6

Rachel Morris	Elected 17 June 2022
Kathryn Hamblett	Elected 17 June 2022
David Bailey	Elected 17 June 2022
Victoria Colclough	Elected 30 November 2022
Alison Hurlstone	Elected 5 December 2022
Tate Preston, Chairperson	Elected 31 December 2022

Principal Office	Millpool Farm Wards Lane Congleton Cheshire CW12 3LN
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Bankers	HSBC Bank Plc P O Box 117 60 Albert Road Middlesborough TS1 1RS
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Independent Examiner	Eileen Grigg
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Officers

Caroline Preston acted as Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Trustees.

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The Trustees' present their Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission, number **1199343**

Objects, organisation and activities

On the 16 June 2022 the Charity Commissioners approved and established a scheme for the future regulation of Autism Dogs Charity.

The scheme is for the public benefit, to promote the health, safety, equality and independence of people who are diagnosed with autism, by providing dogs trained as autism assistance dogs and for the education in training of those diagnosed with autism and their carers/guardians and families in the care and welfare of autism assistance dogs and to provide services, facilities and activities for the benefit of people diagnosed with autism and their carers/guardians and families as the trustees shall deem fit.

Review of progress and achievements

The Board of Trustees

In our first year of the organisation moving from a Community Interest model to a Charity, our immediate challenge was to establish a Trustee Board, that included dedicated individuals with a diverse set of skills that also recognised the need for growth.

The Board formed included a Veterinary Surgeon, Social Worker/Autism Safeguarding Trainer, NHS specialist Lawyer (whose family have an Autism Assistance Dog), and an Assistance Dog Industry Executive/Dog Trainer.

I was appointed the Chair of Trustees. I am a Veterinary Surgeon and previous Board Director of Autism Dogs CIC. I am related to the CEO, Caroline Preston therefore, a robust 'Conflict of Interest Policy' was immediately implemented.

In later months our Trustee Board then added two new members. A second specialist NHS lawyer and Human Resources Specialist. The Board meets monthly but are available to discuss urgent matters weekly which has been a great support to the CEO and ultimately the success and governance of the Charity team.

Changes and Improvements

The move from CIC to Charity added extra pressure in the first quarter to the existing team, but despite this they were enthused to continue their good work and driven to continually improve the service. Success over the previous 6 years meant the Charity inherited the responsibility of continued support of over 50 working teams. The success of previous years resulted in the Charity Board immediately taking in funds from a partial grant/loan of £75,000, in order to invest in the growth of the training team, psychotherapy, and animal welfare team. We wanted to increase:

- The number of new teams we were able to help in a year.
- The support for existing teams.
- Our understanding of the stability and overall mental health within the home of each client
- The number of dogs in assessment living at the farm (HQ).

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- How autism-friendly the farm was to clients, investing in further changes to the client areas.
- The safety and welfare of growing number of working Assistance Dogs.

The investment across the year proved successful, improving:

- Training hours by 30%, producing 4 more qualified teams in the year
- Face-to-face visits for existing teams, top up training, and assessments on the working dogs.
- Psychotherapy and SEN autism behavioural support, with psychotherapy being quadrupled and SEN autism behaviourist hours being added to great effect.
- Areas around the farm, with an autism-friendly office and break out room being created in farmhouse and an outbuilding being converted into a training room.

The client interview process was enhanced to include application form, internal review panel, face-to-face interview with entire family, a video of the client's home environment, concluding with a video interview with the CEO.

The programme structure was also altered, following consultation from fellow Assistance Dog organisations and outcomes from case studies. We hope that this timing re-structure will help both the dog and the beneficiary, which has brought positive early outcomes.

External validation

The Charity continued to work closely with the NAS, whose representatives attended 2 of our fundraising events. We exchanged updates and regularly appeared at NAS events to talk about our work. Our key NAS contact continued to provide steer around feedback on the impact of our work, as well as areas where we could improve the client experience working with our team - at the farm and even in their homes.

Fundraising and Donations

Fundraising and donations continued to cover costs of:

- Administration
- Director fees
- Partial animal welfare
- 20% of vet fees

The remaining costs were covered by the client's local authority, charitable foundations, or the client themselves.

Under the supervision of the General Manager, the team, Ambassadors, and volunteers delivered 5 fundraising events across the year. One of the Trustee Board also created a fund raiser at her child's school. The events stretched non specialist resources but raised small amounts and a lot of awareness.

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Staff

We are proud to be a service for autistic people that is also run by autistic people. We are the only organisation training Autism Assistance Dogs where the majority of the team are autistic. Through our own lived experiences, internal training, and a wealth of knowledge held by our team, we are able to learn more both about ourselves and how we can extend that understanding across our beneficiaries and families.

Staff education continued to be a vital part of our duty of care and to ensure the best possible experience for the client and dog was achieved.

Safeguarding sessions and autism training was delivered frequently to all staff, often face to face by our Trustee and specialist Trainer, and by our General Manager at staff meetings.

All staff also received animal welfare training, including canine first aid delivered by our Trustee Chair and Veterinary Surgeon Tate Preston.

As part of our continued CPD for all staff, 3 members achieved Animal welfare level 2 Diploma and another is currently working towards the same. Our staff members worked together to establish some 'Company Values', helping the team to work towards the organisation's visions and goals. These Company Values are as follows:

Approachable: We create an environment and attitude that allows both our clients and our team to feel at ease, enabling us to create the best experience possible based on their needs.

Dedicated: We strive to provide the best care to our clients and dogs so we can change as many lives as possible.

Respect: We value all of our clients and team members, ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and compassion.

Hardworking: We work hard through responsible actions, always striving to be the best we can be.

Loyalty: We are proud to represent an organisation that does such life-changing work for autistic people and their families.

Timeliness: We work hard to show up on time and provide timely support to our clients, team members, and dogs.

Caring: All of our work revolves around us providing the utmost care attention to our clients, team members, and dogs.

Considerate: We are adaptable, understanding others' needs and adjusting our way of working to accommodate them.

Professional: We work together to provide an outstanding experience, building upon our deep-rooted ethics and our desire to be as skilled as we can possibly be.

Inclusion: We respect and value everyone's differences, creating an environment that both promotes respect and highlights the advantages diversity brings.

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Statistics

Overview of Programme statistics over the year we received:

- 7650 enquires
- 480 applications
- 20 programme places/enrolments
- 36 dogs assessed
- 18 Qualified
- 1 family removed from programme prior to delivery
- 1 dog collected from family after delivery
- 16 new teams all meeting expectations
- Volunteer hours 195

From previous working team's estate:

- 53 working teams
- 1 deceased
- 2 retired

Total number of teams working at end of year: 66

Working teams

Working teams are encouraged to meet and use our private family virtual groups to share stories and support. This continued to be a valuable support and resulted in 10 of our working teams being appointed Ambassadors for the Charity to help build autism awareness and the benefits of our work.

Volunteering and Work Experience

We continued to advocate and immerse ourselves in the autistic community by offering volunteer and work experience to the autistic community. These volunteering opportunities also provided us with the opportunity to educate the volunteers about the work that we do and the help that our Assistance Dogs provide for our beneficiaries.

We delivered a volunteer workshop where 4 young people attended and were awarded a certificate of contribution, and provided nearly 20 work placements across the year. Many of the young people who volunteered for the organisation were autistic.

Finances

First year of the accounts are a partial year because of date that the Charity was established. In summary the accounts reflect 7 months to 31.12.22 plus CIC brought forward
Income Split as per page 11 – donations 12%, grants 8% (including CIC brought forward)
Costs 52% of income (including CIC brought forward).

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Costs of each Programme varied from approximately £18,000 to approximately £23,000 to the end of the first year of delivery. Family contributions for the year were £107,382 and funds moved over from the CIC were £147,271.

CEO report

This was a very special year as the organisation re-established itself as a Charity. With everything that we have learned and achieved, we know that we have something very special to offer the autistic community. However, it's vital that finances are not the barrier to being able to offer to all that need to apply and benefit from our work.

We know that 1 in 68 of our children are being diagnosed with autism - and often comorbidities. Half of these children will not have access to full-time education, and less than 20% will go onto to have a full-time employed career. The challenges faced by an autistic child or adult can often have direct and detrimental consequences on the lives of their families, so acknowledging, understanding, and addressing that is the key to a successful autism Assistance Dog Programme.

Many of our team and our Ambassadors are autistic, including myself, and we believe this provides a unique way of understanding and communication with our client. Along with a wealth of staff training and education, we believe this to be an important component to our approach which will continue.

The success rate of our work has a transformative effect for the client and their families. Nearly 90% of those that we have worked with have gone on to live healthier, more peaceful, and independent lives. Many have been able to go back into education, forged friendships for the first time, improve eating and sleeping habits, improve their communication and social skills, and make overall changes of happiness for their future.

The dog's health, happiness, and welfare remain of the utmost importance, and the team has demonstrated the strength to stop Programmes or remove animals that they know to be unhappy or at risk.

The NAS remain our go-to for education, support, and mentoring. We also enjoy being part of the ADI/ADUK community, and hope to increase our contribution through forging closer relationships with the many incredible Assistance Dog organisations that have so many positive stories and approaches to share.

I recognise the need for focused and skilled resource in fundraising and operationally, which will be a key area of our plans in the next 3-5 years.

Feedback from our team's successes and staff's development proves both inspiring and an exceptional environment to work, volunteer, and learn. We hope to maintain our integrity, drive, and transformative results for our families, and continue to make the positive impact we are achieving for the autistic community.

Reserves policy

After providing sufficient funds to cover all management and administration the Trustees regard any remaining incoming resources as free reserves of the charity and available for the general purposes of training dogs in accordance with the stated objects of the charity.

Autism Dogs Charity Trustees' Report and Financial Statements 31 December 2022

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

Under the Scheme of the Charity and trust law, the Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its income and expenditure. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgement and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounts standards have been followed, subject to any material departures, disclose and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue.

The Trustees are required to act in accordance with the Scheme of the Charity and within the framework of trust law. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to safeguard the assets of the fund and to prevent and detect fraud and other regularities.

The attached financial statements show the current state of the finances.

On behalf of the Trustees



Tate Preston
Chairperson

Date 26th October 2023

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Autism Dogs Charity

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 set out on pages 11 to 14.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an Independent Examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

*Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act

*To follow the procedures laid down in the General 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

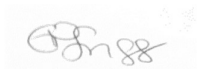
Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 statements below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Eileen Grigg ACMA CTA
EPG Accountants Ltd
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 3JY

23rd October 2023

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Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2022 £	2021 £
Income and expenditure					
Incoming resources					
Dog Training		249,853	-	249,853	-
Donations		38,850	-	38,850	-
Grants		25,820	-	25,820	-
Sundry income		2,540	-	2,540	-
Total incoming resources		317,063	-	317,063	-
Resources expended					
Direct charitable expenditure					
Animal Training Salaries		38,297	-	38,297	-
Animal Welfare Salaries		21,193	-	21,193	-
Vets Fees		8,051	-	8,051	-
Other direct costs		27,661	-	27,661	-
Administrative Costs					
Management Salaries		37,478	-	37,478	-
Pension Costs		1,585	-	1,585	-
Rent		11,200	-	11,200	-
Rates		2,589	-	2,589	-
Light, power, heating		4,108	-	4,108	-
Motor vehicle expenses		2,796	-	2,796	-
Travel		2,538	-	2,538	-
Accountancy		1,850	-	1,850	-
Repairs and Maintenance		1,260	-	1,260	-
Bank charges and Interest		1,749	-	1,749	-
Other costs		4,272	-	4,272	-
Total resources expended		166,625	-	166,625	-
Net(outgoing)/incoming for the year		150,437	-	150,437	-
Recognised gains (losses) on investments					
Unrealised		-	-	-	-
Realised		-	-	-	-
Net movements in funds		150,437	-	150,347	-
Fund balances brought forward from Autism Dogs CIC		2,967	-	2,967	-
Fund balances carried forward		153,404	-	153,404	-

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Balance Sheet

At 31 December 2022

	Note	2022	2021
Fixed assets			
Motor vehicles	3	8,008	-
Computer equipment		190	-
Plant and machinery		-	-
		8,197	-
Current assets			
Cash at bank		70,733	-
Debtors	5	150,403	-
		221,136	-
Current liabilities:			
Creditors: amount falling due within one year	6	3,794	-
		225,540	-
Net current assets		225,540	-
Creditors: amount falling due after one year		72,135	-
		153,404	-
Net assets		153,404	-
Represented by:			
Funds			
Unrestricted income fund		153,404	-
Restricted capital fund		-	-
		153,404	-

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 26th October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



**Tate Preston
Chairperson**

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Notes to the Financial Statements

1 The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities published on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015). Assets & Liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

2 **Basis of preparation**

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.

3 **Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Depreciation has been provided at the following rates in order to write off the assets over their estimated useful lives:

Plant & machinery	25% on cost
Motor vehicles	25% on WDV
Computer equipment	25% on cost

The assets were transferred from Autism Dogs CIC mid-year already having been depreciated in the CIC.

	Plant & machinery £	Motor vehicles £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 16 June 2022	600	12,240	379	13,219
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2022	600	12,240	379	13,219
Depreciation				
At 16 June 2022	600	4,232	190	5,022
Charge for the year	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2022	600	4,232	190	5,022
Net book value				
At 16 June 2022	-	8,008	189	8,197
At 31 December 2022	-	8,008	189	8,197

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4 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

No remuneration directly or indirectly out of the funds of the charity was paid or payable for the year to any Trustee or to any person or persons known to be connected with any of them.

No reimbursement of expenses has been made or is due to be made to any of the Trustees in respect of the year.

5 Debtors	2022	2021
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Clients payments towards dog training	150,403	-
Other debtors	-	-
	150,403	-

6 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2022	2021
	£	£
Taxes and social security	3,258	-
Pension Contributions	535	-
Accruals	-	-
	3,794	-

7 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	2022	2021
	£	£
Bank loans	72,135	-

8 Average number of employees

During the year the average number of employees was 14.