AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Charity number: 1168468

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)
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AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Charity Number	1168468
Registered Office	19 Minehead Avenue Sully Penarth South Glamorgan CF64 5TH
Trustees	Dr Sam Whitmarsh David Ayrton (resigned 8 August 2024) Ms Tracey Bishop (resigned 8 August 2024) Andrew Davies (resigned 8 August 2024) Bernard Bentley (appointed 8 August 2024) Ray Flux (appointed 8 August 2024) Steven Parker (appointed 8 August 2024) Elizabeth Pollard (appointed 8 August 2024)
Key management	Richard Parsons (Operations Manager)
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ
Independent examiner	Simon Ellingham FCA DChA Fawcetts LLP Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors Windover House St. Ann Street Salisbury SP1 2DR

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. This report is presented in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The Accounts are prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

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 who meet in accordance with the Constitution which requires the presence of at least two or, if the number of trustees is 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 three trustees and there is no maximum. There are currently five trustees.

Voluntary staff

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

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.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities - operational

Overview of Charitable Partnerships and Collaborations

AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) exists to support the work of A2B Albania, our affiliated partner working in Albania to serve vulnerable communities through practical help, education, and social support. This work is strengthened through collaboration with a range of partner organisations who provide resources, expertise, and practical assistance and we would like to recognise and thank each of the following: Foodbank Albania, FSCI UK, PARI TEC GMBH- Germany, AMOS Foundation- Germany, GAiN International- Swiss and iSTEP- Swiss, RBN – Netherlands, Hope for Albania – Netherlands, Nova College CIOS Haarlem Hoofddorp- Netherlands, World Race- USA, YWAM.

Fundraising and Donor Engagement

During the year, AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) continued to raise funds and maintain active engagement with supporters in order to sustain and expand A2B Albania's frontline work. We continued to share updates through electronic and written communications, strengthening donor connection and awareness of the ongoing needs across the communities served.

Organisational Impact: Scale and Reach

Across the organisation, A2B Albania's work continues to provide consistent weekly support to over 500 vulnerable individuals. This includes:

- 170 children
- 75 women
- 192 older people
- 13 individuals living with disabilities
- 49 families

In addition to direct individual support, the charity facilitates multiple community groups, including parent engagement and training activities connected to the children and families served, helping strengthen resilience, safeguarding awareness, and long-term wellbeing.

Project Portfolio: Key Initiatives and Impact

1. Multidisciplinary Social Centers (MSCs)

A2B Albania's Multidisciplinary Social Centres remain a core part of our charitable activity, offering multi-layered community support that is practical, relational, and preventative. Through the MSC network, the charity provides a safe, consistent environment where people experiencing poverty, isolation, disability, or disadvantage can access food, education, wellbeing support, and social care.

Rather than operating as single-purpose services, the MSCs bring multiple forms of support together, enabling families and individuals to receive joined-up help that reflects real-life needs.

Key MSC activities delivered during the year include:

Kindergarten programmes

The MSCs provide early years education for children from families facing significant hardship. Alongside learning and development support, children are provided with consistent meals and a stable environment that encourages attendance and engagement in education.

After-school clubs and child-focused activities

The MSCs provide after-school support and structured activities that help children 11-18 remain connected to positive influences and safe spaces. These programmes also reinforce safeguarding awareness, including support that helps prevent child exploitation, violence, and trafficking risks.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Project Portfolio: Key Initiatives and Impact

1. Multidisciplinary Social Centers (MSCs) cont.

Feeding programmes and practical care

Daily meal provision remains a vital component of the work, particularly for older individuals and those living in acute poverty. In addition to hot meals delivered through the centres, support is also provided to those unable to travel, ensuring care reaches the most isolated and vulnerable.

Psychosocial support for older people

As well as addressing physical need, the MSCs provide relational support and safe social connection for elderly individuals experiencing loneliness and hardship. The centres offer a consistent community environment, helping reduce isolation while ensuring people can access practical help.

Community support and family engagement

MSC work continues to encourage and strengthen families, including engaging parents and caregivers through community group activity and training, helping families prioritise education, navigate challenges, and access services they might otherwise struggle to reach.

2. Foodbank Project

The Foodbank Project remains a vital part of the charity's crisis response and ongoing support for households experiencing extreme poverty. Working in collaboration with Foodbank Albania, A2B Albania acts as a key distribution hub in Elbasan and surrounding areas, ensuring food aid reaches those who are most in need.

This support enables families and individuals to meet basic needs while reducing immediate pressures that often lead to longer-term hardship. The project also supports the wider charity network by connecting food provision with other forms of community care and social support.

3. Family Link Project

The Family Link Project continues to connect sponsors directly with families experiencing severe poverty and instability in Albania. During this year, the project supported approximately **49 families**, providing ongoing assistance with essential needs.

Support provided through Family Link typically includes food provision and additional practical support where needed, including help with urgent costs such as rent, medical needs, and education-related expenses. Families supported by this programme often face significant crises, including loss of income, disability, family breakdown, or complex health and social challenges.

Case Study: Mirela is a mother of five children, living with her wider family in extremely difficult circumstances in the countryside near Elbasan. The household includes seven family members, Mirela (27), her mother-in-law/grandmother (68), and five children aged between 3 and 13. Two years ago, Mirela was a victim of domestic violence and was abandoned by her husband. Since then, she and her children have returned to live in the grandmother's home, which is already overcrowded, as they also share the property with the children's uncle and his five children.

Living conditions are very poor, and the family has faced severe hardship, with the children regularly experiencing hunger and malnutrition due to a lack of resources. After joining the Family Link programme, Mirela's family now receives monthly food and hygiene packages, providing stable support for essential needs.

Alongside this, we have been able to improve the children's day-to-day living situation by providing practical items that many of us take for granted. This year, the charity donated beds, mattresses, pillows, and blankets for the children, who previously slept on the floor with only a thin blanket for cover.

A2B have been able to further support the family by providing education support with the two younger children now attending the "Another Life" (AL) kindergarten in Peqin, while the three older boys are enrolled in public school, having previously received early education and care through AL Peqin. Mirela and the children's grandmother continually express their gratitude for the support and care their children have received, recognising the meaningful difference it has made to their daily lives, stability, and wellbeing.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Project Portfolio: Key Initiatives and Impact

4. House of Opportunity

The House of Opportunity provides safe accommodation and structured support for vulnerable young adults, particularly those transitioning from state care or facing heightened risks of exploitation and trafficking. The project aims to provide stability, guidance, and practical life skills, helping individuals build confidence and independence. In January 2025 the House of Opportunity Programme relocated after the local government took back the previous building.

During this year, the House of Opportunity supported:

- **5 young men - residents living within the centre**
- **4 young women supported in a non-resident capacity**

Support includes a stable environment, mentoring, life-skills development, and practical steps towards employment and sustainable independence, with ongoing pastoral support from the local team.

Case Study: Xhulio is now living his independent life in Tirana, and we couldn't be prouder! He grew up in an orphanage in Shkoder, and like so many who leave the Albanian care system, faced the challenge of transitioning into the world without the family support many take for granted. That's where the House of Opportunity programme (HOP) came in. After leaving the care system, Xhulio came to live at HOP for two years, where he learned essential life skills he hadn't picked up during his time in the orphanage. He finished high school alongside training to become a waiter, all while living in a safe and supportive environment. In 2024, he took a huge step towards independence, moving into a shared flat in Tirana to begin his new life. This is exactly what HOP's mission is all about - helping young people transition out of the care system into independent living. But for Xhulio, HOP isn't just a stepping stone; it's still the place he calls home. He often returns to visit his "family" here, feeling safe and supported by the community that helped him along the way. In September, Xhulio turned 23, and the staff and friends at HOP threw him a surprise birthday party to celebrate not only his birthday but also his successes. It was a joyful moment that truly reflected the deep bonds formed at HOP, showing just how much it means to those who have been part of this family. Xhulio's story is a testament to the lasting impact HOP has on the young people it supports, we couldn't be happier to see him thriving in his new life. We look forward to seeing what the future holds for him, and we'll always be here to cheer him on!

5. Children's Camps

Children's camps remain a key part of the charity's outreach and preventative work, providing safe and structured opportunities for children to experience community, learning, play, and encouragement.

During this year, A2B Albania delivered children's camps for approximately **200 children**, across **4 locations**:

- **Peqin**
- **Rrogozhine**
- **Përmet**
- **Elbasan**

These camps provided a mixture of sport, creative activities, games, teaching inputs, and relational support. They also create opportunities to engage families, strengthen positive parenting, and reinforce the importance of education and long-term wellbeing.

6. AMOS Project Support

AMOS continues to provide valuable practical support by transporting high-quality goods from Germany for free distribution to families in need. These goods commonly include essential household items such as beds, mattresses, washing machines, and refrigerators.

This project enables the charity to respond to urgent household crises and support families moving from unstable conditions into safer and more sustainable living environments.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Project Portfolio: Key Initiatives and Impact cont

7. iStep IT and Computer courses

The iStep project organises computer courses for children and young people. These courses are held twice a year in Albania, with a team of 6-8 professionals from Switzerland. Throughout the year, this face-to-face training is followed up through the provision of online sessions every other week. iStep also provides all the necessary materials, including computers, photocopiers, video projectors, and various other equipment to support the learning process.

Staffing in Albania

AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) continued to support the employment of local staff in Albania to maintain and deliver these charitable activities. Staffing numbers remain consistent with the previous reporting year:

- 6 Teachers
- 5 Cooks
- 1 Social Workers
- 3 Cleaners
- 2 House Parents
- 1 Coordinator
- 2 Directors/Managers
- Volunteers from local youth groups, churches and a group of university students studying Social Work or Education

Trustees and Leadership in the UK

Board of Trustees

- Sam Whitmarsh - Chair
- Raymond Flux
- Steven Parker
- Bernard Bentley
- Elizabeth Pollard

David Ayrton, Andrew Davies and Tracey Bishop resigned as trustees in August 2024. The trustees would like to express their heartfelt thanks for their dedication and service over many years. Collectively, these three individuals represent more than two decades of commitment to A2B, and their contribution has been instrumental in enabling the charity to grow and continue its work.

Looking Forward

We extend our deep gratitude to each supporter and partner who makes our work possible. AID TO THE BALKANS (UK) looks forward to the coming year, confident that our collective efforts will continue to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable communities in Albania.

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 entire year to 31 March 2025.

Giving and other income received to fund A2B's work during the year amounted to £60,121 (2024: £64,243). This level of income received is in line with the average in prior years. Gift Aid tax relief is a principal element of the Charity's income, and the amount received during the year, £11,690, represents 12.8% of total donations (2024: 22%).

Grant funding to A2B Albania increased by around 3.8% to £75,630 (2024: £72,877) including some £16,250 granted for specific purposes (2024: £20,877). A2B UK have reviewed funding after the balance sheet date and the Charity's core funding commitment to A2B Albania has been met.

Giving to the Family Link programme and associated family support amounted to £10,505 (inclusive of Gift Aid). Some £5,645 was also received to part fund Another Life Centre in Peqin, Albania. Other appeals and restricted receipts comprised £100 for the House of Opportunity Project. 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 £11,742 and a restricted fund deficit of £4,226. On 31st March 2025, the Charity's funds comprised those on deposit in the UK, being £5,786, all of which was represented by unrestricted funds.

Reserves policy

The trustees' policy on reserves is to maintain cash and bank deposits sufficient to meet short term requirements. On 31st March 2025, the unrestricted fund balance covered about 1 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 24th Feb 2026

For and on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Sam Whitmarsh

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 9 to 11 .

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Simon Ellingham FCA DChA
Fawcetts LLP Chartered Accountants
Windover House
St. Ann Street
Salisbury
SP1 2DR

Date: 4 December 2025

AID TO THE BALKANS UK (A2B)
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT and STATEMENT OF ASSETS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	Funds Unrestricted £	Funds Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary income					
Donations and gifts received in the UK		35,913	16,250	52,163	52,073
Interest					
UK bank accounts		234	-	234	480
Other income					
Gift Aid		7,724	-	7,724	11,690
Total receipts		43,871	16,250	60,121	64,243
PAYMENTS					
Direct charitable expenditure					
Grant funding: A2B Albania		55,154	20,476	75,630	72,877
Other administrative expenses in the UK					
Bank charges		285	-	285	360
Travel expenses		174	-	174	-
		459	-	459	360
Total payments		55,613	20,476	76,089	73,237
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)		(11,742)	(4,226)	(15,968)	(8,994)
Transfers between funds		(2,064)	2,064	-	-
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS) AFTER		**(13,806)**	**(2,162)**	**(15,968)**	**(8,994)**
RECONCILIATION OF FUND BALANCES					
Total balances brought forward at 1 April 2024		19,592	2,162	21,754	30,248
Net receipts/(payments)		(13,806)	(2,162)	(15,968)	(8,994)
Balance on Agency account at 31 March 2024				-	500
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2025		5,786	-	5,786	21,754
Statement of assets					
UK bank balances				5,786	21,754

The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 21th Feb 2026 and were signed on its behalf by:

Dr Sam Whitmarsh

The notes form part of these accounts

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

BASIS OF PREPARATION OF ACCOUNTS

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.

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 £4,600 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 expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year. Any expenses that are incurred are wholly for operating costs within the objects of the Charity.

5. RESTRICTED FUNDS ANALYSIS

	At 1 April 2024 £	Receipts (including Gift Aid) £	Payments £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Family Link Programme	1,100	10,505	12,833	1,228	-
Another Life Centre - Peqin	562	5,645	7,018	811	-
House of Opportunity	-	100	125	25	-
Agency account (note 6)	500		500		
	2,162	16,250	20,476	2,064	-

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 preceding year.

House of Opportunity: Gifts received for the refuge established for young people, run by A2B Albania and mainly funded by third parties.

6. AGENCY ACCOUNT

During the preceding year an appeal was made directly by A2B Albania for support for a family in Albania. Whilst Aid to the Balkans (UK) were not directly involved in the appeal, the Charity was used as a vehicle to transfer monies to A2B Albania by Stewardship, and two tranches of money totalling £5,500 were received towards the end of the financial year. £5,000 was transferred in March 2024 and the balance of £500 held on account at the year end was transferred to A2B Albania in April 2024.