



**Autism  
Together**

# Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

Charity registration number 1007878

Company registration number 02658268 (England and Wales)

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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### Trustees

C A F Battersby  
E Behan (Vice Chair)  
I N Cadman (Chair)  
N M Kennedy  
C Smart  
S J Brealey  
S Leech  
C R Sansome  
N J Whiteside (Appointed 26 October 2024)  
C A Corton (Appointed 26 October 2024)

### Secretary

R J Whitby

### Charity number

1007878

### Company number

2658268

### Registered office

Oak House (Unit C)  
6 Tebay Road  
Bromborough  
Wirral  
Merseyside  
CH62 3PA

### Auditor

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited  
Suites C,D,E, & F  
14th Floor The Plaza  
100 Old Hall Street  
Liverpool  
L3 9QJ

### Bankers and deposit takers

CCLA Investment Management Limited  
1 Angel Lane  
London  
EC4R 3AB

Barclays Bank Plc  
South Wirral Group 9  
Leicester  
Leicestershire  
LE87 2BB

### Solicitors

Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP  
134 Edmund Street  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B3 2ES

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# AUTISM TOGETHER

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# AUTISM TOGETHER

## CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT

### *FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025*

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#### **A message from our Chair of Trustees, Iain Cadman**

I am delighted to report that 24/25 has been another successful year for the charity.

Autism Together has continued to develop and improve how it operates, building on the great reputation it has created since its foundation. Change is not always simple, and our thanks go to everyone involved within the organisation for all their work and support in achieving this.

Our strength is the great care we provide. We have a talented team of people across all areas of the charity providing and supporting this care, ably guided by a capable and passionate Executive Team.

It is important for us to develop and improve the organisation, wherever possible. To be able to do this we need strong finances, as this allows us to plan investment in people and infrastructure in advance. It is, therefore, assuring to see that our financial position continues to remain healthy.

The sector we operate in continues to have its challenges, but the work we have been doing and continue to do puts us in a good position to deal with them.

For all our Trustees, being involved with this charity is an amazing experience, both personally and professionally, and we all look forward to supporting and helping it develop further over the coming years.



# AUTISM TOGETHER

## CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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### Annual reflections from our Chief Executive Officer, Richard Whitby

As we draw the curtains on another highly eventful year, it's clear that 2024/25 has been a period of both meaningful progress and notable achievements. If charities had leaderboards, I dare say we would be climbing steadily, thanks to the energy and acumen displayed at every level of our team.

We have won coveted awards and been shortlisted for many others, while earning "Good" ratings and recognition from regulatory bodies, all on the back of outstanding financial performance.

None of this could be achieved without our Trustees, who have provided essential stewardship and strategic direction, ensuring that every decision aligns with the charity's mission. Executive colleagues have navigated complex challenges and implemented key initiatives. Meanwhile, staff across all levels have demonstrated compassion and professionalism, delivering high-quality services and support every day. Together, their combined efforts have created a solid foundation for the charity's ongoing success and growth.



# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

The Trustees' Report is a combined report of the Trustees and the Directors as required by company law.

## Objectives and activities

### Statement of Public Benefit

The objects of the charity as defined in our Articles of Association amended on 16 October 2021 are:

*To provide, promote and develop services for the welfare, care, training and education of those children, adolescents and adults variously diagnosed as autistic, or having autistic tendencies or traits, or Asperger's Syndrome, whether or not these conditions are associated with other conditions.*

In delivering our objects we provide the following services and have plans in place to enable us to grow and develop these services further:

- Registered Residential care
- Supported Living care
- Day Services

Our progress, including the number of beneficiaries, is reported in both our Annual Review and the Trustees' Annual Report. We accept referrals from across the country, and fees are paid for by the relevant Local Authority, with the people we support making contributions to their fee in accordance with specific criteria from any benefits (social security) which they might receive. Fees may also be paid by the Integrated Care Board (ICB), which is part of the NHS structure, or by Individual Service Funds which people receive after being assessed by a Local Authority.

Autism Together only support people who have an autistic spectrum diagnosis or condition, and their families. Potential beneficiaries are all assessed prior to admission to ensure that we can support them in an appropriate way. This ensures that we can give individuals the opportunity to develop their potential and gain further independence. It also ensures that their families, people supported, and the wider community are supported to understand the condition and widen acceptance.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Our Children & Family Service is partly funded through charitable donations, which enables us to deliver some free services, and is available to families who are affected by autism.



#### Strategic Report

#### Objectives for the Period Under Review

#### Strategic Priority 1. Provide person-centred and high-quality services for people with autism across the spectrum

The charity's dedication to delivering exceptional, person-centred support has been formally recognised through notable assessments and inspections. In a recent evaluation by Cheshire West, our organisation achieved a "Good" rating within the Provider Assessment Market Management Solution (PAMMS), underlining our commitment to quality and safety.

Further affirming our standards, both Supported Living registrations received "Good" ratings across all assessed areas during the 2025 CQC inspections. These accreditations are a testament to the collective expertise, attention to detail, and caring ethos demonstrated by our entire team. Such recognition strengthens our drive for continuous improvement, while delivering an outstanding service for the people we support.

#### Strategic Priority 2. Develop our autism services

Within the year, we have opened another supported living service – The Fountains, which saw the last person move in April. We redeveloped The Ferns into a service able to take complex individuals that otherwise may be placed out of area or in hospitals. The idea behind this service is to provide that short-term assessment for individuals to move on to more permanent services.

Day Services has grown to include a further site in the form of Bridge Farm; this is a community site on which the people we support work alongside volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge, our hope is to acquire this asset on a long-term basis, which will allow us to grow day services in Cheshire. Alongside the obvious growth in supported living and day services, we have developed services by fully embedding electronic care planning across all our services, meaning that we now have excellent oversight of the quality of support being delivered.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Strategic Priority 3. Develop and invest in our staff

The organisation was honoured with the Care Home Employer of the Year award at the GB Care Awards North West, highlighting our supportive workplace culture and dedication to staff wellbeing.



During the fiscal year, we proactively embraced overseas recruitment, which played a pivotal role in reducing staff vacancies to less than 4% by the year's end – a significant achievement in today's challenging employment landscape. Our expanded and diverse workforce has brought fresh perspectives and strengthened our ability to deliver consistent, high-quality care. However, with recent changes in government legislation affecting international recruitment, our focus will now shift toward nurturing staff from a more localised talent pool.

Other incentives include, launching an employee death in service scheme, enhancing maternity and paternity pay, and introducing paid provisions for IVF and neonatal care, paying all employees a 1% pay award in recognition of their contribution, hosting a celebratory ball to honor staff achievements at prestigious Thornton Manor and provided seasonal hampers to all staff.

#### Strategic Priority 4. Invest in our infrastructure and assets

Anticipating the shifting tides of the social care landscape, our Executive Team and Board worked collaboratively to forge a visionary five-year spending strategy. This blueprint doesn't merely react to demand; it seeks to shape our future with purpose and innovation. Headline goals for 2025/26 include the acquisition of two modular buildings for Day Service sites, transforming The Courtyard into five modern residential flats, and breathing new life into Raby Hall through long-planned renovations.

Looking further ahead, we plan to secure our ownership of the Oak House head office building and break new ground in Bromborough with additional Supported Living accommodation – a fitting response to an ever-growing need for quality provision.

#### Strategic Priority 5. Be financially sustainable

The operational financial outcomes achieved during 2024/25 have surpassed those of the previous year, reflecting a period of robust fiscal health for the organisation. This success was driven by several core factors, including a significant reduction in agency staff usage, increased employee retention, effective negotiation of service fees, and strategic growth in service provision.

As a result, the charity is now well-positioned to invest in comprehensive workforce development initiatives and make informed, purposeful decisions regarding future spending.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Strategic Priority 6. Raise autism awareness, acceptance and promote autism good practice

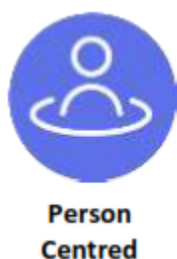


The charity's commitment to excellence has not gone unnoticed. This year, Autism Together was shortlisted in multiple categories at the prestigious National Learning Disability Autism Awards, a testament to our leadership and innovation within the sector.

In addition to these achievements, the charity has been shortlisted for Charity of the Year at the renowned Charity Times Awards, alongside other respected organisations. These accolades celebrate the charity's ongoing dedication to both our staff and the people we support, while providing outstanding autism services.

#### Achievements and performance

##### Meeting Our Values



##### Being Person-Centred

We strongly believe that every person with autism that we support is individual and therefore our approaches to supporting the individuals are all individual. One of our most rewarding developments has been the continued success of our “move through” process. This is designed to help many of the people we support to transition successfully from our Residential services into Supported Living. This reflects our belief that, with the right support, people can develop the skills and confidence needed to live more independently, in environments that reflect the support they require. These transitions are carefully planned, person-centred, and tailored to best meet the needs of the individual. We have celebrated some real successes, with people thriving in their new living situations, with a demonstrable reduction in incidents, along with more community access and a greater sense of ownership over their environments.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Being Respectful

We continue to foster a respectful culture across the organisation, reflected in both our services and our commitment to diversity and inclusion. This includes actively supporting our Autism community within the care we provide and adapting to our growing workforce by strengthening staff networks. Key initiatives include the establishment of the Belonging Together Group, recognition of cultural events such as Neurodiversity week, World cultural diversity day, Pride at Autism Together, International Women's Day, and the delivery of targeted training on Equality and Diversity, sexual harassment, Menopause, and Mental Health.

#### Promoting Learning

The Learning Culture team at Autism Together runs and manages training courses and learning opportunities, both internally for our staff and externally for organisations wanting to learn more about autism and learning disabilities. In a successful year for the department, they have improved their delivery of the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training, then successfully trained and supported autistic people from our services and the local community to co-deliver this course.

#### Positive Communication

We promote positive communication through fostering an inclusive environment where individuals on the autism spectrum feel heard and respected. We use clear, respectful and person-centered communication styles. By actively listening to the voices of the people we support and providing accessible tools to help them to communicate, they help to shape the support that is provided. This year we have gone from strength to strength in our journey towards true co-production. We have developed co-production forums at all our day service sites; this gives the people we support the ability to shape the days that they have. A group of individuals from across the services have actively been involved in delivering the Oliver McGowan program and have been working alongside the NHS on a co-produced research study to develop a new assessment tool for mental health and learning disabilities.



# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Community Connection

Autism Together took over the operation and management of Bridge Community Farm near Ellesmere Port in the spring of 2024. Since then we have established the onsite café as a go-to community destination, offering a friendly face and affordable food and drink from Monday to Friday. The farm is popular with people we support who attend as part of our Day Services provision. Alongside this, we have a community volunteer group who we support to work on the farm. One of our volunteers, was actually a competitor at this year's Special Olympics World Winter Games in Italy where he won a gold medal in the Slalom Event! Our staff also created a range of community activities, perfect for families to enjoy, running on weekdays throughout the various school holidays during the year.



#### Operational Regions – Residential and Supported Living

This year we restructured our Supported Living and Residential Services into a new structure based on Operational Regions. This regional structure is split into three areas based on geographical locations of our different services across Wirral and West Cheshire. Each Region has its own Head of Operations, rather than the previous division of one lead for all Supported Living services and another for all Residential. These changes were brought in to ensure we meet our strategic aims of Growing our Service, Investing in our People, and Continuous Improvement within the organisation.

The three Regional Heads of Operations are Michelle Seddon, Siobhan Hickin, and Hubert Czupryn. Michelle and Siobhan have both formerly been the Heads of Service for both our Residential and Supported Living Services. Hubert was appointed to the organisation earlier in 2025, specifically to bring his experience to this important role.

Having established the Heads of each new Operational Region, they oversaw the appointment of Operational Service Managers, Deputy Managers, and Team Leaders to help manage services and staff across their Regions. This new structure also allows us to meet our vision of growing our services, by providing an operational structure that can grow with the organisation.

It allowed us to invest in our people by uplifting the pay of frontline managers, while supporting recruitment and retention in these crucial roles, along with the development of support staff into management positions. It also helps support our ambition of continuous improvement by improving the quality of the services that we provide to the people we support.

#### CQC inspections

Perhaps the biggest achievement for our Supported Living services across Wirral and West Cheshire this past year has been in having our long-awaited CQC inspections and seeing all services rated GOOD in all areas. We are delighted to get this deserved recognition.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Cheshire West and Chester Council also undertook a full review of the Cheshire services and people we support whom they fund. This enabled us to implement a core hours model in some services, which is a less restrictive option, while identifying opportunities to maximise support and enabling some individuals to access 1-to-1 hours.



#### Complex residential Care

As part of defining and developing our support journey that sees individuals moving through services when they develop, we have transformed one of the residential buildings on Raby site – The Ferns - into a complex service for people with Autism. The building received considerable investment to ensure that it was fit for purpose, with the creation of two sensory rooms, and a new kitchen space, this alongside the spacious gardens, large rooms and freedom of movement that the service offers, ensures that it is an ideal location for individuals that may present challenges in a community setting. Assessment of the individual and planning for individuals next step, begins as soon as possible after admission, ensuring that people do not become 'stuck' in a complex service.

The intensive support that is given through dedicated Practice Leaders, ensures that individuals that have previous failed placements are supported successfully and have positive experiences of support, leading to successful long-term placements.

#### Successes in autism support

Several of the people we support, transitioned this year from properties on our main Raby site into smaller Residential homes and supported living within the community, and are now thriving in their new environments. One individual that moved into a smaller residential home, is now much more independent and likes to choose and make his own breakfast. He does his own laundry and is enjoying accessing the community and developing his independence through managing his finances. He has really blossomed over recent months, is very happy and always full of smiles. Another individual that has recently moved from a Raby Site property into his own tenancy in supported living, has seen a reduction of incidents by 58% and a reduction in PRN usage by 44.4%, showing that he is happy and more settled in his new home.

Another of the people we support has recently been experiencing some communication difficulties. These challenges have understandably increased his anxieties, making him more withdrawn and hesitant to engage in community activities. As a result, staff members have felt less confident in supporting him to enjoy participation in outings. Despite these challenges, he achieved something special. He successfully visited his local bowling alley, supported by his 1-to-1 staff. This was a significant moment, representing a very positive step in rebuilding his confidence and independence in community settings.

Many people have been enjoying visits to our new Bridge Farm site, where they have begun growing their own vegetables and bringing them home to eat. Meanwhile at Weatherstones Court, staff have established a Gardening Club. This is being supported by the Housing Association who are providing equipment and volunteers.

Elsewhere, one of the people we support has been volunteering at a local park, which he thoroughly enjoys; Another has been attending communication classes, which has helped him to identify and better understand his own feelings and emotions; and someone else has downloaded a weather app for his mobile phone in order to improve his independence and reassurance about changes in the weather, which has greatly reduced his anxiety.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Several individuals have progressed onto support work placements through the development of the Pathway to Work programme, this sees them working independently in the community with arm's length support from day services. One individual has been working very successfully alongside our own Estates team, developing his skills in horticulture and general maintenance.

Autism Together has a focus on ensuring that the people we support have an excellent quality of life. Every day, the people we support are supported to enjoy the many activities on offer, and we are greeted with a host of photographs on our internal SharePoint showcasing individuals out for meals, cinema trips, bowling, enjoying parties, visits from families, day trips and holidays. This is not just about enjoyment, but it is a proven positive behaviour support technique to ensure that individuals achieve a sense of self-worth and value within their lives.

#### Day Services



Our Area 1 Day Services comprise the kitchen gardens, woodlands and farm on our Raby site. Over the past year, staff there have been focusing on the transformative power of community, creativity, and connection. Among the most significant undertakings on our farm these past 12 months has been the creation of a brand-new goat enclosure. The construction of the new enclosure was more than a practical upgrade; it was a symbol of teamwork. Staff, volunteers, and the people we support worked side-by-side to plan, design, and build the enclosure, each person bringing their own strengths to the table.

Perhaps the most creative and imaginative endeavour of the year has been the revitalisation of our Adventure Garden. It's a space designed for beauty and relaxation along with meaningful sensory interaction for the people we support. The centerpiece of this transformation was the creation of new planter beds, constructed using reclaimed pallet wood. The process began with raw, weathered pallets and ended with beautiful, functional planters – all thanks to the dedication of staff and the craftsmanship of the people we support. With guidance and encouragement from staff and management, they shaped the raw materials into something truly special.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

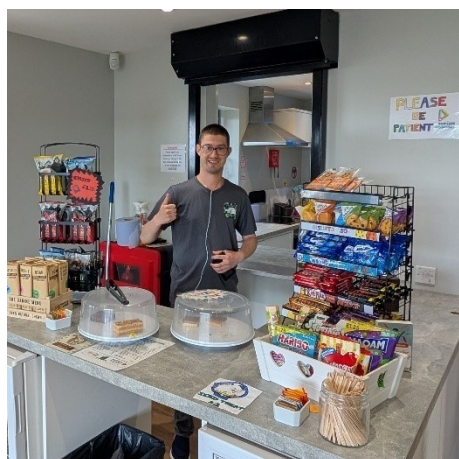
### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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Our Area 2 Day Service provision is based within the historic village of Bromborough Pool, with a range of activities offered to the people we support within three listed buildings that were gifted to Autism Together. Giles Shirley Hall saw a brand new domestic fitted kitchen installed. This has been a hugely successful and popular addition. It's always busy, and there is always a lovely waft of tasty baked treats flowing through the building. This has also increased the opportunity for people we support to learn new domestic skills, promote independence, and improve their quality of life. Individuals are encouraged to plan, with support, the whole process of producing food – including lists of ingredients, visiting the local shops, cooking and also sharing what they produce.



Another popular addition has been the Area 2 Nail Bar and Hair Salon! Also, there's a community lounge, music mixing space, and a fully-fitted dance studio – all of which have been huge hits with the people we support.

We have seen huge success in our autism support, helping more people we support transition smoothly into the service, while achieving our values of being person-centred and safely reducing restrictive practices. Allowing people we support to access different buildings and activities throughout the day, as they choose, has led to a marked reduction in incidents. Our staff have been excellent at balancing both the enjoyment and development of individuals accessing our services. Lots of feedback from people we support, families, and stakeholders has been fantastic.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Sewing is a popular new activity in Area 5. One of the people who attends the service decided to use this new skill to create some bespoke Christmas gifts for family members. A number of other individuals then started making items that are personal to them and are currently planning future sewing projects. This activity has required the use of different techniques and has employed a number of different motor skills. In our workshop there have been plenty of other skills on show, including pottery and t-shirt designing. Such activities encourage the people we support to take the lead on their own designs and work on projects that have real meaning to them.

#### Community Engagement

Our Area 3 Day Services encompasses our popular cafe and shop in the heart of Bromborough Pool Village, the Gardens beyond it, along with Port Sunlight River Park Café. The Area has changed quite dramatically in the past 12 months and is also setting the foundations for further developments. We have introduced animals, adding two chickens and several guinea pigs which has greatly improved the activities and interests for people we support.

There were many highlights we enjoyed in the past year. We saw the popular return of our Autism Friendly Christmas Grotto; we designed and ran events in the cafe during all the school holidays; we held village walks to mark Autism Awareness Month, Easter and Christmas too. Other highlights included our Heritage Week tours of the village, led by staff and people we support, and Foxfields School attending the cafe to perform a carol concert.

#### Supporting Families

Alongside the expert care we provide to the people we support, we also offer support for their families. Our Children & Family Service offers support to parents and family members of younger autistic people that we support. Through Activity Clubs for children and teenagers, plus workshops and coffee mornings for parents and carers, the service supports many families in the Wirral area.



Each summer, we invite these young people we support and their wider families to attend a Family Fun Day at our Autism Together Farm site at Raby. Summer 2024 was a huge success, with a record attendance of over 150 children and their families. These fun days are a great opportunity for the children and young people we support to bring their parents and siblings along to spend a day with us, meeting the animals and enjoying the many sensory and creative activities we provide.

Staff members from within our Day Services, Communications and Fundraising team played their part in making the day a success, along with some fantastic volunteers and community partners including our regional Family Hubs, plus donations from Tesco and ASDA.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Supporting Staff

This past year the Executive Team has been spending time improving benefits and the overall culture for all staff. Part of this was in revamping our long service awards for loyal staff. The team hugely expanded our long service awards to include one for people who have completed one year with us, then adding a 5-year award with further awards available to staff in successive 5-year increments, up to 40 years of service. We want all of our employees to be recognised within their roles for the excellent work they do each day. Staff reaching these milestones now receive a certificate and gift voucher to thank them for their work and commitment to the organisation.

We followed this with the introduction of our new Family Friendly Policy, providing our employees with the support they need at the time they need it. The balance of family life and work is recognised by Autism Together and we wanted to enhance what we were already doing, with additional support for staff around neonatal and fertility care. Further to this, the People Services Team continue to put together and deliver maternity baskets to staff members who are about to go on maternity leave.

Continuing our family policies, we were awarded the Employer with Heart charter mark from the organisation The Smallest Things. This is an organisation run entirely by volunteers who have had premature babies. Their charter mark is awarded to organisations that extend leave at full pay for parents and partners who have a premature baby, and who fully support parents and partners returning to work following the birth of a premature baby.



#### Recognising Staff

Together, we celebrate the dedication and compassion of our staff, recognising their vital role in creating a supportive, inclusive environment where autistic individuals can thrive. As a charity, Autism Together proudly recognizes the dedication of our staff through enhanced benefits, our annual staff awards, monthly staff recognition schemes, seasonal benefits, and comprehensive wellbeing support—ensuring every team member feels valued and empowered to deliver exceptional care.

#### Embracing Innovation

This year, we embraced several innovative new tools and approaches:

- **Nourish** – We successfully rolled out a new digital platform called Nourish, enhancing how we plan, record, and review support. This technology allows our teams to provide more responsive and informed care; while enabling people we support to have their voices clearly reflected in their personal plans. Nourish gives us great insight into an individual's day and helps us monitor their progress. Now that Nourish is fully rolled out, we are concentrating on developing the quality of its data and ensuring it reflects what is 'important to' and 'important for' the people we support.
- **Sensory Lending Library** – Our new Sensory Lending Library has been a fantastic addition at Autism Together. It allows individuals to try sensory equipment for themselves, before deciding whether to purchase it. It is making access to tailored sensory resources more practical and affordable. We have had some real success with the "try it and see" approach, something we are continuing to encourage, going forward.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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- **Further embedding Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), Autism Together Model (ATM), and Oliver McGowan Training** – These frameworks and training initiatives have deepened our understanding of the fine balance between what is 'important to' a person and what is 'important for' them. As a result, we are seeing clearer identification of positive outcomes and an even greater shift toward truly meaningful support. We have always had a positive culture of person-centred care. These training schemes allow us to build higher, upon those strong foundations.

#### Bromborough Pool Development



Our focused fundraising project for last year and the foreseeable future is the redevelopment and refurbishment work we're undertaking within Bromborough Pool Village. In 2023 Autism Together was gifted a number of listed buildings which we use for our Day Services provision. Now that we own these buildings, we have put together a ten-year strategy plan to sympathetically redevelop the buildings. The Fundraising Team has been tasked with raising £8m to achieve the finished vision.

External repair work to the Grade II-listed Enterprise Centre alone amounts to £500,000. The Fundraising Team, accustomed to raising money for the people we support, had to learn a new skill set in the form of heritage fundraising. The positive press we received about our intended plans for the historic model village of Bromborough Pool has been wonderful, resulting in increased engagement and interest in the village from the community.

The team has developed working relationships with Wirral Borough Council's Principal Heritage Officer and Head of Place, Culture, and Visitor Economy, who are supportive of our plans for the village. We are also working closely with Wirral Conservation Areas, who have agreed to support any funding applications we make for heritage grants. Alongside these partnerships, we have been working closely with the Architectural Heritage Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, who are providing support in developing our applications for funding.

Two successful applications for grants from the Architectural Heritage Fund have provided money towards the costs associated with architects and plans. As part of our plans for the village, we are keen to get more people to visit the area, as many in Wirral still don't know about the place and its fascinating history as a model village that pre-dates nearby Port Sunlight.

During National Heritage Week in September 2024, staff and people we support helped to offer guided tours around the listed buildings and historic village. We also ensured the refurbishment of the village's War Memorial and the reintroduction of an annual memorial service, holding the first of these on Remembrance Day 2024. Staff and people, we support are particularly enjoying being part of these activities and learning more about the history of the village and its buildings.

Our next planned project is the refurbishment and restoration of a derelict building behind Giles Shirley Hall, which is reported to have been the original village fire station. This project will transform the building into a large sensory room for the people we support. In 24/25 we secured donations of £44,000 for this project, just over half the total required.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### New Branding

In the summer of 2024, we began thinking about a whole new brand concept for Autism Together, covering new fonts, colour schemes and, of course, a completely new logo for Autism Together. The previous logo, incorporating a spectrum design, had been used by the charity for over 10 years, since it changed name from Wirral Autistic Society to Autism Together.

With the organisation working towards a new five-year plan for the future, this branding was created to better represent the charity's vision and the work it does to support autistic people, while lending the logo a more modern and professional look. It incorporates an accessible new font and a graphical representation of the work we do.



#### Fundraising Review and approach

Each year our Fundraising Strategy is reviewed, to ensure it is relevant to current fundraising trends, and that the Fundraising team is attaining the very best return on investment of their time.

Fundraising targets are increased annually, which can understandably prove difficult during the current economic climate. So, despite increasing our target by 3%, the team still managed to exceed their 2024/25 target by more than 20%. This is a fantastic achievement.

During 24/25 Autism Together only raised funds using in-house fundraisers, employed directly by the charity. No third-party fundraising has taken place in the last twelve months. This means that we can keep strict control over all events ensuring adherence to the Code of Fundraising Practice.

## AUTISM TOGETHER

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Our fundraising effort involves:

- Regular Giving
- Community Fundraising
- Legacy Giving
- Corporate Fundraising
- In Memory Giving
- Operating a Lottery
- Trusts and Foundations
- Individual Giving
- Events
- Selling Autism Together merchandise
- Organisational Giving



Autism Together is registered with the Fundraising Regulator. The Head of Fundraising is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (MCIOF) and holds an MCIOF Diploma.

Autism Together abides by the standards set out in the Code of Fundraising Practice, which applies to fundraising carried out by all charitable institutions and third-party fundraisers in the UK. The Code of Practice is regularly used to produce and update all necessary fundraising policies, as well as to provide staff training.

During 24/25, there were no incidents or issues of non-compliance with the Code of Practice by Autism Together. There have been no complaints made regarding Autism Together fundraising in the last 12 months.

As a charity that works with vulnerable people, all staff are required to attend regular training on how to identify and work with people who may be vulnerable. In addition, the Fundraising team has produced a specific policy about fundraising with vulnerable people. This includes making sure that people are treated fairly and with respect during interaction, explaining the cause in a way that does not mislead people and being sensitive to people who may be in vulnerable circumstances. The policy is reviewed annually and discussed with fundraising staff during training. Anyone that staff identify may be in vulnerable circumstances is referred to the Head of Fundraising, who will review all previous contact and speak to the person directly to make a decision about how to proceed.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Financial review

A net surplus for the year of £2,070k has been recorded (2024: net surplus of £2,764k).

#### Income

Income increased 10.3% compared to last year from £29,965k to 33,048k.

Income in all major service areas has improved.

#### Expenditure

Expenditure has increased by 13.9% from £27,201k to £30,978k in the year. This largely reflects the increase in income.

Payroll costs still represent over 79% of our income and have increased 16.6% against last year.

#### Capital Expenditure

This year we spent £1,583k (2024: £1,344k) on property improvements and equipment. The main expenditure largely aligns with the purchase of 2 residential properties, 14 Woodland Grove and 1/2 The Green, alongside the programme to improve our existing properties.

#### Cash Flow

An overview of the cash movements during the year are given in the statement on page 32. After adjusting for noncash items, such as depreciation, operations during the year generated positive cash flow of £1,624k (2024: £2,158k). The other contributors to cash outflow in the year have been investment in property and facilities of £1,583k (2024: £414k) and net cash used in financing activities of £Nil (2024: net cash generated of £1,054k).

#### Future issues

With the support from several local authorities led by Wirral, we have been able to continue to pay our support staff the Real Living Wage as a minimum. In order to continue to support this, in addition to inflation, we need our local authority and health commissioners to reflect this in their fee uplifts in the future, and we will negotiate hard to achieve this.

#### Pension Liability

New and existing staff members are able to join a defined contribution pension scheme, where there is no recourse to the assets of the organisation. Since 1 November 2013 Autism Together has become subject to the regulations surrounding Automatic Enrolment and is using the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) for this purpose.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Reserves Policy

The Trustees reviewed the reserves policy in 2025. The target for free reserves has been set at £3.5m, this level has been set based on income security. In setting this level of reserve, the Trustees have considered the risks around income streams including possible late payment of fees by key local authorities.

Free reserves are defined as unrestricted funds, excluding amounts held in the form of fixed assets, loans to purchase those assets and designated funds. As at 31 March 2025 free reserves were £3,764k compared to £3,546k at 31 March 2024.

Seven discretionary funds have been previously set up and approved by the Board of Trustees as follows:

- Development and Property Fund £2.5m (2024: £3m).  
This has been set up for investment in line with our 5-year investment strategy which will support the organisation to further its work for the benefit of people with autism. This includes £800k to purchase 2 modular buildings for day service sites, £250k to refurbish the Courtyard into 5 flats, £450k to refurbish Raby Hall the legacy residential building, and £1m towards funding the building of a supported living complex.
- Asset Purchase Fund £1.8m (2024: £810k)  
This fund was set up to purchase Oak House (central office) previously rented, in line with our year investment strategy which will support the organisation to further its work for the benefit of people with autism.
- Disaster Recovery Fund £100k (2024: £50k)  
This fund was set up as a contingency for repair and restoration following a crisis situation.
- Staff Recognition Fund £50k (2024: £50k)  
This fund was set up to recognise our staff and enable the issuing of non-contractual gifts and rewards to staff.
- Staff Wellbeing Fund £20k (2024: £20k)  
This fund was set up to support staff experiencing hardship.
- Employee Death in Service £50k (2024: nil)  
This fund was set up to support bereaved families of employees, should this unfortunate event arise.
- Bromborough Pool Village Redevelopment £148k (2024: nil)  
This fund was set up to support the regeneration of this site. The total cost of this project is £8m.

In addition to the funds designated for specific purposes, the Trustees hold a designated fund representing fixed assets, and less any specific funding for that purpose. This reflects the fact that these funds cannot be readily used for any other purpose.

At 31 March 2025 this fixed asset fund amounted to £6,412k (2024: £5,360k).

Details of designated funds and of restricted funds may be found in notes 21 and 22 to the accounts.

#### Investment powers and policy

Under the Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any way the Trustees think fit. Cash that is not immediately needed for day-to-day expenditure or that is being held for a future project is invested prudently in interest earning deposits with approved Bank of England UK institutions.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Principal Risks and Uncertainties

At all of their Board meetings, the Trustees monitor the major risks that the charity faces, mainly through the risk register.

The principal risks fall into two main categories: those that relate to matters under the control of the organisation and those which are as a result of external factors. Areas that largely are within our control include risks around ensuring the safety of people we support and staff, the suitability of our facilities and equipment and the safeguarding of our assets, inclusive of financial, digital and physical. These are mitigated through our internal policies and procedures, including training and support given to staff that we endeavour to keep up to date, relevant and shared throughout the organisation.

Risks arising through external uncertainties include the potential impact of national legislative changes, local authority policy changes and external factors that impact on our funding and cost base. We seek to mitigate these by being forward looking in terms of assessing the potential impact of such changes, with forward financial planning, appropriate development of new services and diversification as well as keeping in close communication with commissioners with respect to our service provision.

Our highest current risk is an IT and/or Data Breach – Cyber security is a significant concern for most businesses as fraudsters find new ways to exploit organisations. A cyber security plan is in place and cyber training is a mandatory training course for all staff.

Autism Together have achieved Cyber Essentials Plus Accreditation in 2025, which is a UK government-backed certification that helps organisations protect themselves against common cyber threats—with an added layer of assurance. Cyber Essentials plus includes an independent technical audit to verify that the required security controls are properly implemented. Autism Together has crisis prevention tools in place, including an IT disaster recovery plan and IT business continuity plan.

Other material risks include:

- Our key funders not uplifting fees in line with cost increases, particularly surrounding National Living Wage and employers National Insurance contributions.
- Local recruitment - Despite maintaining a strong position in workforce growth, with an average vacancy rate of 4% compared to the national average of 8.3%, we acknowledge the need to adapt our recruitment strategy in response to recent Home Office policy changes. While the government has indicated potential future initiatives to encourage workforce re-entry, we are proactively developing local strategies to attract, retain, and grow our talent pipeline.
- New CQC regulations causing an inconsistency in grades. The quality assurance team have rolled out a new format of quality assurance audits, which brings this process in line with the new approach from CQC.
- Major health and safety incident. Investment in the capacity of the H&S team, training, robust audits, effective management and communication all support a positive health and safety culture.
- Environmental sustainability - Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) threshold will be met when turnover exceeds £36m. The Executive team are working with external consultants to prepare for this.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Funds Held as Custodian Trustees on Behalf of Others

Where funds are held on behalf of residents or other individuals supported by the company, those funds are kept in separate client accounts and are subject to controls in accordance with Care Quality Commission's regulations. These are not included in the assets of the company and as at 31 March 2025 amounted to £1,011,297 (2024 - £955,377). This is monitored daily to ensure that the funds are correctly identified and apportioned.

Funds are held on behalf of residents and other people we support where the individuals concerned are unable to manage their own financial affairs without additional support, and that support is provided by the company as part of the overall package of support provided.



#### Pay Policy for Executive Team

The pay of the Executive team is reviewed annually, and the Chief Executive Officer makes recommendations to the Remuneration and Appointments Committee regarding any non-cost of living salary increases.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### Plans for future periods

In 2025/26 and beyond, we aim to achieve the following:



- **Invest in our People**
  - Continue to pay the Real Living Wage to support staff
  - Award all employees a discretionary pay award in recognition of their contribution
  - Host a celebratory Awards night to honor staff achievements
  - Provide seasonal hampers to all staff at Christmas
  - Host a staff Christmas party
  - Continue to review staff pay and benefits
- **Grow our services**
  - Fill the remaining capacity of the Ferns, complex residential unit
  - Fill our new residential service, the Courtyard
  - Increase capacity in Day Services
  - Currently exploring new Supported Living schemes with anticipated launches in late 2026/early 2027
- **Continuous improvement and development of our services focusing on up-to-date, cost-effective operating models and ensuring they meet modern commissioning intentions**
  - Purchase a new compliance system, scheduled for implementation in 2025/26
  - Purchase and implement Lumis Learning Management System to support staff development
  - Purchase and implement a new Day Services system, BromCom
  - Review Day Services support models, to recognised reduced support needs
  - Introduce a hybrid support model to recognise the support needs transitioning from complex residential to mainstream residential services
- **Refine our charitable purpose**
  - Review and update our Children and Family Services offering to ensure they meet current needs and standards
  - Continue to review our property stock to ensure we are providing high quality services that align with our purpose

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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- **Develop our portfolio**
  - Purchase two modular buildings to enhance our Day Service provision
  - Renovate The Courtyard into 5 new residential flats
  - Start the long-awaited refurbishment of Raby Hall
  - Begin the process of purchasing our existing Head Office building
  - Review of all remaining property leaseholds
- **Create a community learning culture**
  - Secure a contract with the local NHS to deliver Oliver McGowan training to staff
  - Propose a revamp of our ATM (Autism Together Model) training to become co-produced from 2026

## Structure, governance and management

### Governing Document

Autism Together is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The company was originally formed under Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 29 October 1991 which were replaced by new Articles of Association on 16 October 2021.

### Trustees

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

C A F Battersby	
E Behan (Vice Chair)	
I N Cadman (Chair)	
J Callcott	(Resigned 5 April 2024)
N M Kennedy	
C Smart	
S J Brealey	
S Leech	
C R Sansome	
C Ward	(Resigned 27 May 2025)
N J Whiteside	(Appointed 26 October 2024)
C A Corton	(Appointed 26 October 2024)

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

#### Other Officers of the Charity:

Secretary to the Trustees	Mrs J Alkins
Chief Executive Officer	Mr R Whitby
Director of Operations	Mrs A Kemp
Director of People	Ms H Bilton
Director of Finance	Mrs C S Davies
Director of Estates & Facilities	Mr C E J Cullen

#### Members

The trustees are required to regulate the admission and classification of members of the charity (including the admission of organisations to membership), the rights and privileges of such members and the conditions of membership, the terms on which members may resign or have their membership terminated, and the entrance fees, subscriptions and other fees or payments to be made by members. No persons shall be admitted a member of the charity unless their application for membership is approved by the trustees. There were 76 members at 31 March 2025, each of whom agree to contribute such amount (not exceeding £1) to the charity's assets if it should be wound up while they are a member, or within one year after they cease to be a member, for payment of the charity's debts and liabilities.

#### Appointment of trustees

The maximum number of trustees under the Articles of Association is 15. The Board of Trustees approve nominations for presentation to the AGM after consideration by the Remuneration and Appointments Committee. Details of trustees who held office from 1 April 2024 to the date of this report are shown on page 22 of this report.

#### Trustee induction and training

New trustees undertake an induction and training programme. All trustees also complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure.

#### Trustees and Public Benefit

Autism Together exists for public benefit. The trustees have received training on, and paid due regard to, the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in determining the charity's aims and objectives and in the way it delivers its services. Elsewhere in this report, the trustees give information about the way in which it has delivered its charitable purposes for the public benefit.

#### Organisation

The Board of Trustees carries responsibility for the efficient and effective management of the charity. The full Board meet monthly i.e. 12 times a year. In July 2024 the Board made the decision to discontinue sub-committee meetings, with all responsibilities transferring to the Board.

We have a Remuneration and Appointments Committee that meets on an ad hoc basis to consider nominations to the Board and sub-committees and the remuneration of the Chief Executive and other operational Directors. The organisation obtains advice from the Charity Commission as required and the trustees are aware of their responsibilities as trustees of a charitable organisation.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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The day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, who attends all Board of Trustee meetings. The Chief Executive heads an executive team which comprises five other operational Directors: Director of Operations, Director of People, Director of Business Development, Director of Finance and Director of Estates and Facilities. Meetings of this team are held monthly to monitor the progress of the charity.

#### Risk Management

Throughout the year the Board and its sub-committees have reviewed risk registers at each meeting linked to the delivery of the strategic and operational plan. A strategic risk register that combines risk, controls and assurance is used by the Board to support risk management. In addition, Beever and Struthers provided an internal audit service with work planned with the Risk and Audit Committee based on risk. The Risk and Audit Committee ensures that risk is being effectively managed on behalf of the Board.

#### Equal Opportunities policy

We are an equal opportunities employer. All jobs are open to all applicants, subject to necessary occupational qualifications and all applications are given equal consideration. Training is provided for all employees to increase their knowledge and skills. Access to jobs and training is provided regardless of gender, age, domestic care responsibilities, race, disability, sexuality, beliefs, health, irrelevant criminal offences or any other personal characteristic. In order to allow opportunities for people with disabilities, the organisation will seek to ensure that, in accordance with the Equality Act. We also invest in coproduction with some of our working practices to include the people we support who play a critical role within our charity.

#### Provision of Employee Information

The Working Together Group is the staff forum, which allows opportunities for staff across the charity to channel good news stories and suggestions to develop our services, which provides a more contemporary approach to staff engagement. Representatives for each key service area were chosen by the group to represent their teams. This group enables the staff to have a voice in shaping the charity's future and allows their feedback to be heard from the grass roots up to represent our diverse and inclusive workforce. We have a talented team who effectively channel and promote staff communication through various platforms to drive engagement and the participation of our workforce.

#### Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Autism Together for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited be appointed as auditor of the company will be put at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

#### Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



I N Cadman (Chair)

**Trustee**

23 September 2025

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM TOGETHER

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#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism Together (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM TOGETHER

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#### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

#### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM TOGETHER

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#### **Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### **Identifying and assessing potential risks related to irregularities**

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance;
- the charity's own assessment of the risks that irregularities may occur either as a result of fraud or error;
- the results of our enquiries of management and members of the Board of Trustees of their own identification of and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charity's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

(i) The presentation of the charity's Statement of Financial Activities, (ii) revenue recognition and (iii) the overstatement of salary and other costs. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the UK Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice - 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued by the joint SORP making body.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the charity's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These included the registration with the Care Quality Commission, Safeguarding and Data Protection Regulations.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### TO THE MEMBERS OF AUTISM TOGETHER

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#### Audit response to risks identified

As a result of performing the above, we identified the presentation of the charity's Statement of Financial Activities, revenue recognition and overstatement of wages and other costs as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud. The key audit matters section of our report explains the matters in more detail and also describes the specific procedures we performed in response to those key audit matters.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management and members of the Board of Trustees concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with relevant authorities where matters identified were significant;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Philip Griffiths (Senior Statutory Auditor)**  
for and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited

23 September 2025

**Accountants**  
**Statutory Auditor**

Suites C,D,E, & F  
14th Floor The Plaza  
100 Old Hall Street  
Liverpool  
L3 9QJ

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total 2025 £'000	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total 2024 £'000
	Notes						
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	3	148	110	258	1,112	81	1,193
Charitable activities	4	32,509	-	32,509	28,665	-	28,665
Investments	5	281	-	281	107	-	107
<b>Total income</b>		<b>32,938</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>33,048</b>	<b>29,884</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>29,965</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds	6	85	-	85	91	-	91
Charitable activities	7	30,859	35	30,894	26,954	71	27,025
Other expenditure	14	-	-	-	85	-	85
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>30,944</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30,979</b>	<b>27,130</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>27,201</b>
<b>Net income</b>		<b>1,994</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2,764</b>
Transfers between funds		(3)	3	-	(16)	16	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	9	<b>1,991</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>2,738</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2,764</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		12,836	71	12,907	10,098	45	10,143
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2025</b>		<b>14,827</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>14,976</b>	<b>12,836</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>12,907</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The reported surplus of £2,764k in the prior year includes land and property with a total value of £930k which was donated to the charity during the year. This value of these properties is included in donations and legacies above.

If these items were excluded, the reported surplus in the prior year would have been £1,834k.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirement for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £'000	£'000	2024 £'000	£'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	16		6,479		5,484
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	17	3,621		2,446	
Cash at bank and in hand		7,075		6,753	
		10,696		9,199	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	18	(2,193)		(1,760)	
Net current assets			8,503		7,439
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			14,982		12,923
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	19		(6)		(16)
<b>Net assets</b>			14,976		12,907
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	21		149		71
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	22	11,080		9,290	
General unrestricted funds		3,747		3,546	
			14,827		12,836
			14,976		12,907

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 23 September 2025

I N Cadman (Chair)  
Trustee

Company Registration No. 2658268

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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	Notes	2025 £'000	£'000	2024 £'000	£'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>					
Cash generated from operations	28		1,624		2,158
<b>Investing activities</b>					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,583)		(414)	
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		446	
Investment income received		281		107	
		<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
<b>Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities</b>			(1,302)		139
<b>Financing activities</b>					
Settlement of defined benefit pension scheme asset		-		1,425	
Repayment of bank loans		-		(371)	
		<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
<b>Net cash generated from financing activities</b>			-		1,054
			<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>			322		3,351
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			6,753		3,402
			<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>			<u>7,075</u>		<u>6,753</u>
			<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>

The notes on pages 33 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

##### Charity information

Autism Together is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Oak House (Unit C), 6 Tebay Road, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside, CH62 3PA.

In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are described in the Trustees' Report on pages 1 to 17.

##### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £'000 except where stated.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

##### 1.2 Going concern

In consideration of the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis, the trustees have considered the principal financial risks facing the company and the steps they have taken to mitigate them. The company is facing increasing payroll costs as a result of the increases in the National Minimum Wage, Real Living Wage and Employer National Insurance contributions, and with that, the ability of Local Authorities to reflect these increased costs in annual fee uplifts.

The trustees have sought to mitigate the impact of these factors by ensuring that all new fees are set at an appropriate level of full cost recovery and that existing fees are reviewed regularly to ensure that they have been increased to match the current cost of provision of that care. The trustees regularly monitor cash flow requirements moving forward to ensure that sufficient funds are available to pay wages and debts as they fall due.

The trustees also make targeted investments in developing new services that ensure that new income streams are opened up to the charity.

On the basis of these considerations, the period of which is at least 12 months from the date of signature of the financial statements, the trustees conclude that the going concern basis is appropriate.

##### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that the trustees have set aside at their discretion for particular projects or purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

##### 1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of receipt.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Income from government and other grants is recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met, then these amounts are deferred.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes and includes interest. Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method and is recognised as the charity's right to receive payment is established.

#### 1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Direct charitable expenditure comprises services supplied and activities undertaken which are identifiable wholly or mainly in support of the charity's activities. Support costs represent costs such as strategic management and development, finance, HR, training, IT support, estate and property management and general administration.

Cost of generating voluntary income is attributed to the salary cost of staff involved directly in fundraising activities.

Governance costs comprise the professional fees expended, together with an apportionment of the time on these matters by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance.

Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

---

#### 1 Accounting policies (Continued)

##### 1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	2-20% straight line basis.
Leasehold improvements	Depreciated over the remaining term of the lease, subject to a maximum of 60 years.
Fixtures and fittings	25-33% straight line basis.

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

De minimis capitalisation level is £2,000.

##### 1.7 Fixed asset investments

Investments in subsidiaries are included at cost. The company has one subsidiary at 31 March 2025 which is dormant and the total amount invested is £2. Consolidated accounts have not been prepared on the grounds of immateriality. Details of the subsidiary are given in note 28 to these accounts.

##### 1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

##### 1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

##### 1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

##### **Basic financial assets**

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

---

#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

##### ***Impairment of financial assets***

Financial assets, other than those held at fair value through income and expenditure, are assessed for indicators of impairment at each reporting date. Financial assets are impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the financial asset, the estimated future cash flows have been affected.

If an asset is impaired, the impairment loss is the difference between the carrying amount and the present value of the estimated cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The impairment loss is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

If there is a decrease in the impairment loss arising from an event occurring after the impairment was recognised, the impairment is reversed. The reversal is such that the current carrying amount does not exceed what the carrying amount would have been, had the impairment not previously been recognised. The impairment reversal is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

##### ***Derecognition of financial assets***

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

##### ***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

##### ***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

#### 1.11 Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of Schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

##### 1.12 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the charity has a legal or constructive present obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the charity will be required to settle that obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting end date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation is recognised at present value. When a provision is measured at present value, the unwinding of the discount is recognised as a finance cost in net income/(expenditure) in the period in which it arises.

##### 1.13 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

##### 1.14 Retirement benefits

The company operates two money purchase (defined contribution) pension schemes. Contributions payable to this scheme are expensed in the year to which they relate. These contributions are invested separately from the company's assets.

#### 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

##### Critical judgements

###### Assessing indicators of impairment

In assessing whether there have been any indicators of impairment in relation to assets, the trustees have considered both external and internal sources of information such as market conditions and experience of recoverability. There have been no indicators of impairments identified during the current financial year.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

(Continued)

##### Key sources of estimation uncertainty

###### Estimating value in use

Where an indication of impairment exists, the trustees will carry out an impairment review to determine the recoverable amount, which is the higher of fair value less cost to sell and value in use. The value in use calculation requires the trustees to estimate the future cash flows expected to arise from the asset or the cash generating unit and a suitable discount rate in order to calculate present value.

###### Recovery of receivables

The charity establishes a provision for receivables that are estimated not to be recoverable. When assessing recoverability, the trustees consider factors such as the ageing of the receivables and the past experience of recoverability.

###### Determining residual values and useful economic lives of property, plant and equipment

The charity depreciates tangible assets over their estimated useful lives. The estimation of the useful lives of assets is based on historic performance as well as expectations about future use and therefore requires estimates and assumptions to be applied by management. The actual lives of these assets can vary depending on a variety of factors, including technological innovation, product life cycles and maintenance programmes. Judgement is applied by trustees when determining the residual values for plant, machinery and equipment. When determining the residual value management aims to assess the amount that the company would currently obtain for the disposal of the asset, if it were already of the condition expected at the end of its useful economic life. Where possible this is done with reference to external market prices.

#### 3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000	Restricted funds 2025 £'000	Total 2025 £'000	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total 2024 £'000
Donations and gifts	148	110	258	165	81	246
Donations in kind	-	-	-	947	-	947
	<u>148</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>1,112</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>1,193</u>

Included in donations in kind in the prior year is land and property with a total value of £930k which was donated to the charity.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 4 Income from charitable activities

	<b>Charitable Income 2025 £'000</b>	<b>Charitable Income 2024 £'000</b>
Statutory bodies	32,059	28,496
Training and employment support	82	18
Subscriptions	1	1
Cafe income	67	63
Other income	300	87
	<u>32,509</u>	<u>28,665</u>
	<u><u>32,509</u></u>	<u><u>28,665</u></u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	32,509	28,665
	<u><u>32,509</u></u>	<u><u>28,665</u></u>

#### 5 Investments

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000</b>
Interest receivable	281	107
	<u>281</u>	<u>107</u>

#### 6 Raising funds

	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £'000</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000</b>
<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>		
Seeking donations, grants and legacies	11	23
Staff costs	74	68
	<u>85</u>	<u>91</u>
Fundraising and publicity	85	91
	<u><u>85</u></u>	<u><u>91</u></u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable Expenditure 2025 £'000	Charitable Expenditure 2024 £'000
<b>Direct costs</b>		
Staff costs	24,359	20,920
Depreciation and impairment	587	579
Provisions	794	737
Household	151	142
Day services	89	104
Social enterprise	42	39
Activities	28	27
Maintenance	330	212
Service contracts	165	150
Utilities	429	458
Rent and rates	252	346
Communications	112	132
Transport	458	451
IT & reprographics	284	218
Marketing & PR	7	3
Other	97	172
Insurance	386	327
	<u>28,570</u>	<u>25,017</u>
<b>Share of support and governance costs (see note 8)</b>		
Support	2,220	1,889
Governance	104	119
	<u>30,894</u>	<u>27,025</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	30,859	26,954
Restricted funds	35	71
	<u>30,894</u>	<u>27,025</u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8 Support costs	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	Basis of allocation
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Staff costs	1,712	-	1,712	1,442	-	1,442	
Information technology	114	-	114	70	-	70	
Office costs	56	-	56	37	-	37	
Other	338	-	338	340	-	340	
Audit fees	-	19	19	-	15	15	Governance
Legal and professional	-	80	80	-	99	99	Governance
Operational director's support	-	5	5	-	5	5	Governance
	<u>2,220</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>2,324</u>	<u>1,889</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>2,008</u>	
Analysed between							
Charitable activities	<u>2,221</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>2,325</u>	<u>1,889</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>2,008</u>	

Where support costs can not be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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<b>9 Net movement in funds</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting)		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	587	579
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	77
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

### **10 Auditor's remuneration**

Fees payable to the charity's auditor and associates:	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>For audit services</b>		
Audit of the financial statements of the charity	13	13
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>For other services</b>		
Taxation compliance services	4	-
All other non-audit services	2	2
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	6	2
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

### **11 Trustees' and key management personnel remuneration and expenses**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the current or preceding year.

No trustees were reimbursed for expenses incurred on and paid on behalf of the charity in the current or preceding year.

### **12 Employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>
Direct charitable	866	862
Management and administration	38	39
Fundraising	2	2
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Total	906	903
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

12 Employees	(Continued)	
	2025	2024
Employment costs	£'000	£'000
Wages and salaries	23,620	20,445
Social security costs	2,014	1,591
Other pension costs	511	394
	<u>26,145</u>	<u>22,430</u>

Payments under settlement agreements totalling £25,000 were made to one employee in the reporting period.

Included in wages and salaries above are agency fees of £832,686 (2024: £1,235,885).

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
£60,001 - £70,000	1	3
£70,001 - £80,000	3	1
£100,001 - £110,000	1	1
£110,001 - £120,000	1	-
	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>

Of the employees whose emoluments exceed £60,000, none (2024: 3) have retirement benefits accruing under defined benefit pension schemes.

#### Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Aggregate compensation	<u>618</u>	<u>525</u>

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Chief Executive and the four operational Directors: Director of Estates and Facilities, Director of People and Culture, Director of Finance and Director of Operations.

### 13 Pension costs

The company operates two defined contribution schemes in respect of the employees. The assets of the defined contribution schemes are held by independent managers. The pension charge includes contributions due from the company which amounted to £511,000 (2024: £393,000) in relation to the schemes with Pensions Trust and National Employment Savings Trust (NEST).

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 14 Interest payable and similar charges

	<b>Total</b>	Unrestricted
	<b>2025</b>	funds
	<b>£'000</b>	2024
		£'000
Net loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	77
Financing costs	-	8
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

#### 15 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its activities because all of its income is applied for charitable purposes.

#### 16 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Cost</b>				
At 1 April 2024	7,731	1,603	628	9,962
Additions	1,496	29	58	1,583
Disposals	-	-	(260)	(260)
Transfers	1,151	(1,151)	-	-
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
At 31 March 2025	10,378	481	426	11,285
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>				
At 1 April 2024	3,278	758	443	4,479
Depreciation charged in the year	481	3	103	587
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(260)	(260)
Transfers	376	(376)	-	-
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
At 31 March 2025	4,135	385	286	4,806
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Carrying amount</b>				
At 31 March 2025	6,243	96	140	6,479
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
At 31 March 2024	4,454	845	185	5,484
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 17 Debtors

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade debtors	1,594	1,434
Other debtors	42	39
Prepayments and accrued income	1,985	973
	<u>3,621</u>	<u>2,446</u>

#### 18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
	<b>Notes</b>	
Other taxation and social security		352
Deferred income	<b>20</b>	15
Trade creditors		756
Other creditors		152
Accruals		485
		<u>2,193</u>
		<u>1,760</u>

#### 19 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
	<b>Notes</b>	
Deferred income	<b>20</b>	16
		<u>6</u>
		<u>16</u>

The accrual due after more than one year is in respect of rent accrued during an initial rent free period for one property lease. The accrual will be reversed over the period of the lease.

#### 20 Deferred income

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Arising from rent free periods of property leases	23	31
	<u>23</u>	<u>31</u>

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	17	15
Non-current liabilities	6	16
	<u>23</u>	<u>31</u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

<b>20</b>	<b>Deferred income</b>	<b>(Continued)</b>	
	Deferred income at 1 April 2024	31	41
	Released from previous periods	(8)	(10)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	Deferred income at 31 March 2025	23	31
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

### 21 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	<b>At 1 April 2024</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>At 31 March 2025</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
M&S Kitchen Gardens	16,566	-	(5,522)	-	11,044
Enterprise Centre Bikes / Trikes DS Area 2	-	1,000	(1,193)	193	-
Holiday Fund	8,565	159	(812)	365	8,277
Xmas Grotto, Magenta	-	1,946	(1,451)	-	495
Unlocking Excellence Project with NHS	-	4,156	(660)	(2,079)	1,417
Screwfix	3,000	-	(1,000)	-	2,000
Weatherstones Projector	1,724	4,000	(1,889)	-	3,835
Barclays - Wallaby Area Development	-	680	(500)	(180)	-
Me and My Money	-	20,000	-	(873)	19,127
BPV Sensory Building	-	43,636	-	-	43,636
IMO M.R. Weatherstones	-	1,081	-	-	1,081
Raby Day Services IMO K.W. Income	-	900	-	-	900
BPV Architectural HE	-	10,000	(15,590)	5,590	-
Children and Family	946	-	(493)	-	453
The Green Shed	10,320	-	(3,440)	-	6,880
Bromborough Pool Village	3,164	-	8,502	1,726	13,392
Raby Sensory Room	24,031	6,000	(10,472)	-	19,559
Other	2,658	-	(869)	(1,789)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	70,974	93,558	(35,389)	2,953	132,096
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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21 Restricted funds	(Continued)				
Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
M&S Kitchen Gardens	11,344	-	(10,380)	15,602	16,566
Holiday Fund	9,800	1,000	(2,235)	-	8,565
Screwfix	4,000	-	(1,000)	-	3,000
Weatherstones Projector	-	1,724	-	-	1,724
Medicash Foundation	-	3,200	(3,200)	-	-
Connected Club	1,169	4,692	(5,861)	-	-
Drummond Avenue	2,514	-	(2,514)	-	-
Children and Family	582	1,103	(739)	-	946
The Green Shed	-	16,000	(6,225)	545	10,320
Bromborough Pool Village	-	17,781	(14,617)	-	3,164
Raby Sensory Room	-	32,563	(8,532)	-	24,031
Other	15,775	2,792	(15,909)	-	2,658
	<u>45,184</u>	<u>80,855</u>	<u>(71,212)</u>	<u>16,147</u>	<u>70,974</u>

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# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### 21 Restricted funds

(Continued)

All figures above are in Pounds, not thousands.

##### **Purpose of principal restricted funds**

###### **Kitchen Gardens**

In 2022/23, the charity again received funds from M&S bank, this time to improve facilities at Raby Kitchen Gardens.

###### **Holiday Funds**

Funding was provided to enable people supported by the charity to go on holiday.

###### **Green Shed**

Funding was received to provide residents with a place to store personal items.

###### **Bromborough Pool Village**

Funding was provided to improve internal and external spaces in the gifted buildings in order to provide better services and improve facilities for the service users the Charity supports.

###### **Raby Sensory Room**

Funding was provided for the construction of a new sensory room at the Raby site.

###### **Me and My Money**

Used to develop a collaboratively designed resource to assess the financial capacity of autistic individuals. Co-created by staff and the people we support, this tool will be used with every individual accessing our services. Its purpose is to build budgeting skills, promote informed financial decision-making, and increase long-term financial independence.

###### **BPV Sensory Building**

This project will refurbish a long-neglected building—formerly the village fire station—acquired through the transfer of Bromborough Pool Village assets. Once restored, it will become a fully accessible sensory space for the people we support. The facility will, offer a much-needed resource whilst enhancing the appearance of the village.

###### **Architectural Heritage Fund**

This funding was awarded to cover professional fees associated with the development of plans for the Enterprise Centre.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 22 Designated funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2024	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets fund	4,837,086	522,843	5,359,929	-	1,052,063	6,411,992
Bromborough Pool village redevelopment	-	-	-	-	147,884	147,884
Development and property fund	1,051,513	1,948,487	3,000,000	-	(500,000)	2,500,000
Wellbeing fund	-	20,000	20,000	(8,270)	8,270	20,000
Asset purchase fund	-	810,000	810,000	-	990,000	1,800,000
Disaster recovery fund	-	50,000	50,000	-	50,000	100,000
Staff recognition fund	-	50,000	50,000	(31,555)	31,555	50,000
Employee death in service	-	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
	<u>5,888,599</u>	<u>3,401,330</u>	<u>9,289,929</u>	<u>(39,825)</u>	<u>1,829,772</u>	<u>11,079,876</u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 22 Designated funds

(Continued)

All figures above are in Pounds, not thousands.

##### 1. Fixed assets

The Fixed Asset fund represents the amount of reserves needed to provide the property and equipment for the charity to operate. This reflects the fact that these funds cannot be readily used for any other purpose. It equates to the book value of unrestricted fixed assets of £6,426,908 (2024: £5,384,284), less the amount funded by the rent-free periods of property leases held by the charity of £14,916 (2024: £24,355).

##### 2. Bromborough Pool Village Redevelopment £148k (2024: £nil)

This fund was set up to support the regeneration of this site. The total cost of this project is £8m.

##### 3. Development and Property Fund £2.5m (2024: £3m).

This has been set up for investment in line with our 5-year investment strategy which will support the organisation to further its work for the benefit of people with autism. This includes £800k to purchase 2 modular buildings for day service sites, £250k to refurbish the Courtyard into 5 flats, £450k to refurbish Raby Hall the legacy residential building, and £1m towards funding the building of a supported living complex.

##### 4. Staff Wellbeing Fund £20k (2024: £20k)

This fund was set up to support staff experiencing hardship.

##### 5. Asset Purchase Fund £1.8m (2024: £810k)

This fund was set up to purchase Oak House (central office) previously rented, in line with our 5-year investment strategy which will support the organisation to further its work for the benefit of people with autism.

##### 6. Disaster Recovery Fund £100k (2024: £50k)

This fund was set up as a contingency for repair and restoration following a crisis situation.

##### 7. Staff Recognition Fund £50k (2024: £50k)

This fund was set up to recognise our staff and enable the issuing of non-contractual gifts and rewards to staff.

##### 8. Employee Death in Service £50k (2024: nil)

This fund was set up to support bereaved families of employees, should this unfortunate event arise.

#### 23 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	6,426	53	6,479	5,413	71	5,484
Current assets/(liabilities)	8,423	80	8,503	7,439	-	7,439
Long term liabilities	(6)	-	(6)	(16)	-	(16)
	<u>14,843</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>14,976</u>	<u>12,836</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>12,907</u>

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### 24 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Within one year	276	340
Between two and five years	189	448
	<u>465</u>	<u>788</u>

#### 25 Related party transactions

In the year to 31 March 2025 there were no donations to the charity from trustees (2024: four trustees made donations totalling £130).

#### 26 Company limited by guarantee

The charity is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Articles of Association. Each of the members has undertaken to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards meeting the charity's debts in the event of it being wound up.

#### 27 Subsidiaries

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 March 2025 are as follows:

Name of undertaking	Registered office	Nature of business	Class of shares held	% Held	
				Direct	Indirect
The Wirral Centre for Autism Limited (formerly Autism Together Limited)	England and Wales	Dormant company	Ordinary shares	100.00	

Wirral Centre for Autism Limited was incorporated on 26 March 2015 as Autism Together Limited. Its name was changed to The Wirral Centre for Autism Limited on 22 June 2016 when its former name was transferred to this company, which had been known as The Wirral Autistic Society up to that date. The Wirral Centre for Autism Limited has not traded since it was incorporated and its accounts have not been consolidated into the Financial Statements of Autism Together on the grounds of immateriality. The Wirral Centre for Autism Limited is incorporated in England and Wales with company number 9510849.

In addition, Autism Together has a controlling interest in The Wirral Autistic Society Limited, a company limited by guarantee. This company was incorporated on 19 April 2016 as The Wirral Centre for Autism and renamed The Wirral Autistic Society Limited on 22 June 2016. The liability of Autism Together under the terms of the guarantee is limited to £100. The Wirral Autistic Society Limited is incorporated in England and Wales with company number 10132167.

# AUTISM TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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<b>28</b>	<b>Cash generated from operations</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
		<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
	Surplus for the year	2,069	2,764
	<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(281)	(107)
	Non-cash donations	-	(930)
	(Gain)/loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	77
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	587	579
	<b>Movements in working capital:</b>		
	(Increase) in debtors	(1,174)	(241)
	Increase in creditors	431	26
	(Decrease) in deferred income	(8)	(10)
	<b>Cash generated from operations</b>	<u>1,624</u>	<u>2,158</u>

### 29 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.