

Annual Review

2023 - 2024

AEM

Autism East Midlands





George Smith

Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank all of our dedicated staff for their unwavering commitment and dedication in providing quality care to the people we support. We have all continued to work hard in the face of difficulties experienced due to changes in public policy, an increasingly turbulent time in politics and rising costs which are being seen across the sector.

In the last Annual Review, we shared the news that all frontline staff were to receive a second pay rise in December 2022. This provided help to our staff through a difficult cost-of-living crisis.

This year, we have reaped the benefits of putting our staff first. More service users were able to access respite support this year, and the numbers of students that attended Sutherland House School has also increased, allowing more young people to have their needs met much earlier in their school career.

We had many stories of staff who go above and beyond, and were also thrilled to see some new faces in the organisation this year, with recruitment continuing to recover post-pandemic and allowing us to expand and create new roles, such as our Social Enterprise Lead, which will play a vital role in future projects moving forward.

While we are mindful of the challenges ahead, we are optimistic for the future of Autism East Midlands. However, we know that success can only be achieved by the continued support of our staff, communities, and those who fundraise on our behalf or have left us a gift in their will.

We thank you for taking the time to read this annual review, and hope that the support you have given us this year will continue in the future.



Jane Howson

Chief Executive Officer

In this role, Ann will continue to work closely with the school and its new Headteacher Robbie Jones, to ensure that we continue to provide a holistic, person-centred education for all our students and are also able to expand our existing offer for child services.

In the climate of uncertainty that follows an election year, we're so grateful to be in a position as a charity to expand our services and we have a lot of exciting plans in the coming year, including a new school, developing Worksop's former fire station into a day centre and more projects that will be announced on our website and social media nearer the time.

All of the above can only be achieved with the support of our staff, donors, funders, supporters, trustees, families, carers, service users, communities and others championing our cause.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to sharing more in the months ahead.

We've continued to go the extra mile in 2023/2024, investing more in the core services that we provide and ensuring that the people we support see and experience those benefits.

Our Whitegates respite service marked its first anniversary, and you'll see stories throughout this review of how the people we support, as well as families, parents and carers who need short-term care and provision for their loved ones have benefitted from this service.

As always, it is important to us that this is guided by the outcomes chosen by each person that we support.

This year, we were pleased to promote Ann Stewart, who has made massive contributions to Sutherland House School and has done a fantastic job as Headteacher for many years. We were pleased to appoint Ann into a new role within Senior Leadership as Director of Education.

About AEM

We've been supporting autistic people and their families since 1968.

Our charity was founded by a small group of parents in Nottingham, who were seeking a better future for their children. Two years after launching the charity, Sutherland House School was opened to its first students.

It soon became clear that there was a need for services for adults too and we opened our very first accommodation-based service in Worksop for adults. Today?

Well, we now provide support to families across the region from Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire through to Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire.

Our services include:

- Residential support
- Support living services
- Flexible day services
- Respite
- Employment support

- Family support hubs
- Parent workshops
- And specialist education at Sutherland House School.

While we've grown, our support is still very much led by our service users. We strongly believe that each person we support should feel heard, valued, in control, independent, respected, and included.

Our Vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our Mission

To advocate, provide and develop high-quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

What did we do?

Our year in pictures



APRIL 2023

Jane's piano performance

Musical maestro, Jane from our Poplars residential service delighted an audience with an evening of piano music.



MAY 2023

Coronation celebrations

Many of our services celebrated the momentous coronation of King Charles III. Our Family Support Hubs hosted coronation-themed activities for youngsters, while Hamilton day service had their own arts and crafts session.



JUNE 2023

Music sessions launched at Hill Top

Karen Matthews, who has been an autism practitioner at Hill Top for the past 12 years, launched new music sessions which were a hit with our residents in Bolsover.



OCTOBER 2023

Carlton Road's new garden and patio area

Service users at Worksop's Carlton Road service enjoyed their newly transformed garden and patio area.



NOVEMBER 2023

Odd Socks Day

Sutherland House School joined thousands of people across the country to wear mismatched socks for the day to celebrate individuality and differences.



DECEMBER 2023

Beechwood wows audience with festive show

Residents at our Beechwood service staged a terrific Christmas show for family and friends. This was a group effort with everyone taking part in some form, including service manager, Luke Drury, playing the part as narrator!

JULY 2023 Garden project blossoms at Hamilton

Work began to create an improved garden area at our Hamilton service so that service users could spend more time there. The overgrown allotment was tidied up, the trees and bushes were cut back and the paths were cleared away.



AUGUST 2023 Exam results day

It was another joyful exam results day at Sutherland House School, with 27 successful exam results across a range of subjects and levels including Entry Level, Level 1 and GCSE.



SEPTEMBER 2023 Employment service establishes Employment Champions

A newly extended employment programme is set to offer more assistance to autistic job seekers, providing careers-related information and guidance to the people we support at our Hamilton and Mundy Street day services.



JANUARY 2024 Students welcome Pronto Rugby team into school

Pronto Rugby, a national rugby team that formed in 2023 to raise funds for Autism East Midlands and other charities, paid a visit to Sutherland House School.



FEBRUARY 2024 New training centre opens in Nottingham

Marchant House, our training centre for our school's older students, officially opens with thanks to the late Eric Kenneth Marchant estate and the Wolfson Foundation, which has allowed us to use the 3-bedroom house in Chilwell.



MARCH 2024 Sherwood Centre visit to Nottingham trams

Service users at our Sherwood Centre are huge fans of travelling on the Nottingham trams. When NET Tram found out about this, they invited us along for an exclusive visit around the site. Thank you NET Nottingham Trams for showing us around!



Adult Services

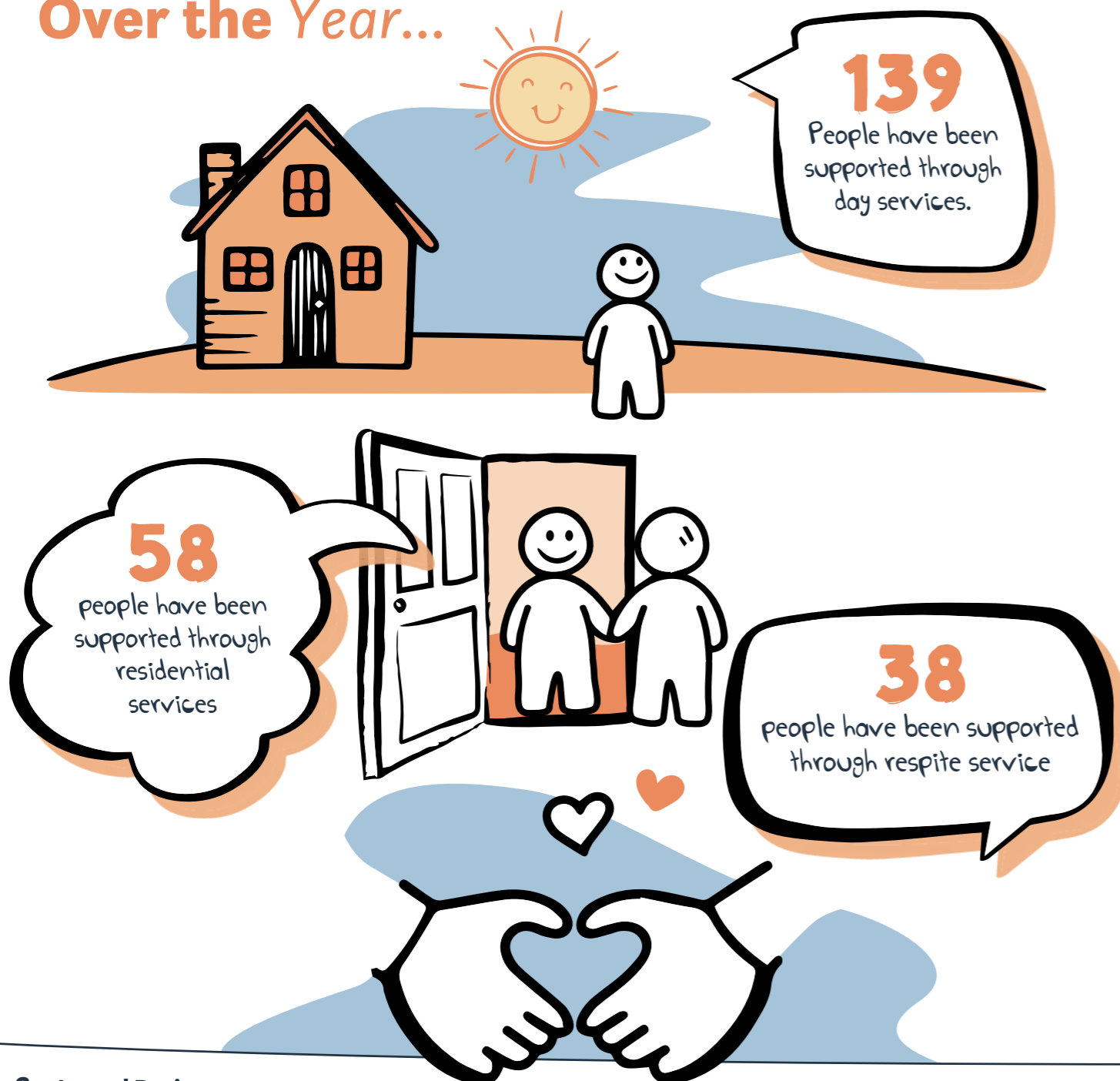
Providing a positive experience

We're proud of our many adult services across the East Midlands and our hard-working staff that keep us going. Whether it is our residential services, day services or respite service, we have always aimed to provide a person-centred, professional service with the people we support at the heart of all that we do.

This year, our Whitegates respite service celebrated its first anniversary. Over the year, it has begun to support 38 new service users, with even more awaiting commission from their local authority after completing home assessments. We have supported people arriving under emergency respite and families looking to go on their first holiday abroad.

All this makes a huge difference for families with caring responsibilities.

Over the Year...



Whitegates: One year later...

As Whitegates marks its first anniversary, we asked one family how they've benefited from the Worksop service. Here they share their experience.

Having a child with special needs is hard enough when they are in full time education. When that provision ends, then your whole world is turned upside down!

Suddenly they have nothing to do and nowhere to go – all the structure and routine that they were dependent on (and as parents we relied upon) disappeared overnight.

**A regressed enormously as he wasn't in a situation where he was having demands placed on him on a daily basis. We were always aware that he would do things at school that he definitely would not do at home for us. There was nobody able to push him out of his comfort zone in that way. This is why respite services like Whitegates are so vitally important to our young people.*

*It is so important that *A has the opportunity to build up relationships with others, who are able to offer him the vital care and support that he needs in order to thrive moving forward.*

*Something as simple as going out for a Sunday dinner to celebrate a birthday or Father's Day, for example wouldn't be possible, as *A would not be able to cope in that setting. For years things like this were simply 'avoided' as being too difficult/impossible, but now I feel that we are able to plan for things like this knowing that *A is happy doing something else – something that means far more to him than 'coping' whilst we do something that is important to us.*

*The ability to finally plan and book holidays is also a huge thing for us. Finding holidays that suited *A was always tricky, and again it was always easier for us not to go – particularly if it involved a foreign flight.*

*Since *A has been staying at Whitegates our lives have changed enormously, so much for the better*

you wouldn't believe! We have come a long way as a family in a relatively short time.

Thank you to all those at Whitegates from the bottom of my heart.

**We have removed the names from this story to protect the privacy of the family involved.*



Jane's Story

Music marvel Jane who lives at our Poplars residential service showcased her extraordinary skills during a very special concert in Whitwell.

Jane, 63, has enjoyed music from a very young age. She first began by playing the recorder, and after watching the Sound of Music film amazed everyone by quickly learning to play all the music from the film score.

It was her recorder teacher who suggested that Jane learn to play the piano.

As both Jane's father and grandfather played the piano, her parents decided to find a local piano teacher for her. Her father encouraged her love of music further and she went on to train at the prestigious Royal School of Music in London.

Jane has her own electronic piano at the Poplars, which she practices daily, and she was delighted to perform in her own show, An Evening of Piano Music with Jane, which took place at the Derbyshire Community Centre on Saturday 22nd April.



Mia's Story

Mia's mum wanted to go away with friends for a few nights. Mia is non-verbal and requires special support, and she needed to be sure that Mia could be settled before making plans.

Mia is an only child and has a special relationship with her mum and has difficulty feeling confident around others.

Whitegates Respite Service is not local to Mia's home, but as her mum tells it:

"When friends ask me why I travel so far to drop Mia off at Whitegates, I simply say 'wouldn't you if your only child's happy place is there?'"

Whitegates Respite Service offers autism-focused specialist support to adults like Mia, when carers require a break from their caring role for days or weeks at a time. The service is only a short distance away from Worksop town centre.

With six self-contained apartments provided as part of the service, users are able to build their independence and take part in activities both in-service and outside in the community, with support staff on-hand to provide care and needed support.

Mia's mum describes how the staff at Whitegates are like an extended family for Mia, and how she is "literally pushed out the door" when they arrive at the service.

"It's a gesture that every parent of a non-verbal child prays for and honestly if anything happened to me, Whitegates would be the only place my daughter would settle. Thank you Autism East Midlands for giving her a voice."



Callum's Story

Callum is very interested in trains.

So when he told the staff at Mundy Street Day Services that he wanted to go on train visits and see all the different train stations, his support workers did everything they could to help make Callum's desired outcomes a reality.

Staff began driving him to the local train station on days when he wanted to go, discussing with him every step of the way what they would do.

"He picked up things really quickly," said Lisa Bradbury, Manager of Mundy Street Services, "and he takes everything in."

For some autistic people, planning a journey can be a struggle. With public transport there are many stressors to consider, such as:

- **Noise levels**
- **Number of people around**
- **What times the trains arrive**
- **What to do in case of delays**
- **Where to go**
- **Walking or commuting to/from the station**
- **Peak and off-peak times, especially when it's busy**

It is no wonder that service users such as Callum can take some time to become comfortable using public transport or opt not to use it entirely. But Callum wanted to go on train visits, so he and his staff worked out a plan.

Callum's Big Day

Lisa shared with us Callum's incredible progress, as he took several big steps towards his desired outcomes.

Callum wanted to do some train-spotting at Nottingham station.

He planned his journey before leaving Mundy Street, checking the timetables and cost of travel to make sure he could afford the trip.

Realising that he could not afford the train there and back, he took a bus to Nottingham and spent the day train-spotting at Nottingham with his staff, taking a packed lunch.

Then he purchased his own train ticket from Nottingham to Heanor.

These were huge steps for Callum and showed what a marked improvement he had made since first arriving at our day service in Mundy Street.

"He was so excited when he came into the office," said Lisa, "he was telling us all about the different trains he saw!"

Scott's Story

"He really struggles with trying new things"

Service users at the Dukeries Autism Centre in Worksop visited Danum Museum, Library and Gallery in Doncaster.

Home to impressive collections of books and art, there was a lot to see on the visit, and our service users loved exploring.

Support Worker Paige gave a special mention to one Dukeries service user, Scott, who previously had a bit of trouble with new experiences.

Talking about the trip, she said: "Special shout-out to Scott as he really struggles with trying new things and he did fabulous!"



Joseph's Story

"This was a big step and he loved it."

Mundy Street service users visited the Luminarium at Highfields in Nottingham.

The Luminarium offers a controlled sensory experience which consists of inflatable domes displaying beautiful colours and patterns, captivating the senses with lights.

For one of our service users, Joseph, this was a huge step.

Lisa, our Mundy Street manager, said:

"Joseph doesn't go out much, so this was a big step and he loved it. He went out in the mini-bus and had a great day at the Luminarium."

Not only did Joseph enjoy his time out at the luminarium, but it seemed that he would be eager to do more trips in the future.

"When he arrived back at Mundy Street he was so happy and kept signing to go back out in the mini bus!"



Sutherland House School

Education for young autistic people

At Sutherland House School, we're committed to making sure that learning doesn't always take place in the classroom, and that there is support in place for students as they go on to adulthood.

As well as the opening of Marchant House, we also facilitated many work experience opportunities for our older students to get a taste of what adult life has to offer.

Key Stage 5 students did work experience at Stonebridge City Farm, Busy Bees Day Nursery, Sneinton Community Centre, and the Mind Charity Shop. Students also met with our own employment coaches about the help that AEM can offer to young people to find and access jobs after the age of 18, ensuring that students can make informed decisions about their future.

Over the Year...

76

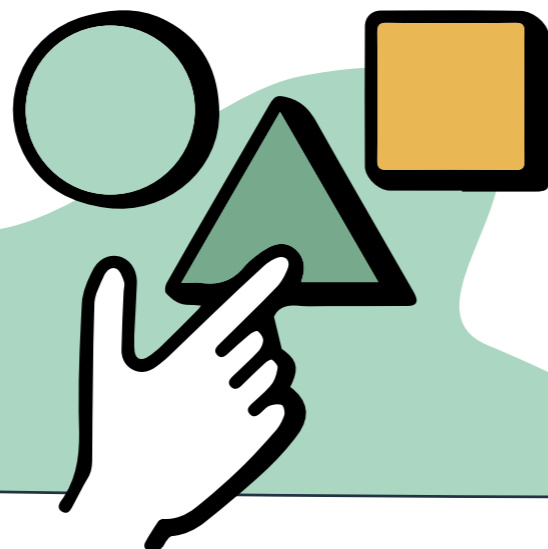
students attended Sutherland House School

72

accreditations and pass grades were earned by students

21

students took part in Active Living activities



Highlights across the year...

Workplace visit to Mantic Games

With the rise of young people developing interests in games-related careers, we arranged for students from Years 11 to 14 to visit Mantic Games, speaking to employees and learning how they design, produce, manufacture, market, and sell a wide variety of board games.



Visit to Mantic Games

Programming workshop at Vision West College

Key Stage 3 students took part in a programming workshop at the Computing department in Vision West College in May. They learnt how to program Lego robots using Scratch and took part in a challenge to program their robots to complete an obstacle course.



A Vision West College

Exam results day

It was a joyful exam results day at Sutherland House School, with 27 successful exam results across a range of subjects and levels including Entry Level, Level 1 and GCSE.

Despite the much-publicised tightening of grade boundaries this year, the vast majority of Sutherland House students' grades were awarded grades at expected levels or higher.



Exam Results Day

Case Study

Students attend our first Preparing for Adulthood Fair

We hosted our first Preparing for Adulthood Fair, aimed at year 9 pupils and upwards, where AEM's adult services and external providers shared options for the future.

As part of our careers guidance program, the event aimed to ensure that students, as well as their parents and carers, were informed about their options upon leaving school.

These options included:

- **Further education**
- **Employment**
- **Residential care**
- **Day services**

As well as external providers, members of Autism East Midlands' Adult Services and Employment teams attended to share information on day services, care and employment.

Service users from Autism East Midlands Dukeries service also baked biscuits, which were very popular with students!

Ten parents and carers attended the fair as well as students from three classes.

We know that there are many decisions to be made as young people approach adulthood, and we want our students to be better informed on what the future may hold for them, leading to better outcomes for young people.



Case Study

New training centre for autistic youngsters opens in Nottingham

A training centre run by Sutherland House School officially opened in February to help students develop independence skills within a house setting.

The spacious 3-bedroom house in Chilwell gives the school's older students the chance to learn a variety of household skills from cooking and cleaning to gardening.

"It has been designed to help our students move into adulthood and prepare them for a world after school," said Ann Stewart, Director of Education at Autism East Midlands.

Each term four students, aged between 17 and 19, will learn key skills that will help them become more independent, whilst also developing their confidence in their daily lives.

"We're using a structured approach that will enable our students to work towards their independence at their own pace."

"It means that when the time comes, they will be ready to move on and go on to live in supported living or go onto further education or whatever they choose to do next. We would like to maximise their potential and ensure they are prepared for their next stage in life."

The creation of the training centre has been made possible thanks to a grant of £30,700 awarded from the Wolfson Foundation.

The building itself was donated to Autism East Midlands and Sutherland House School by the late Eric Kenneth Marchant. It underwent a major transformation in order to create this training facility and has been named in his memory.



Children & Families Services

Over the Year...



Family Support

An amazing year

With waiting lists for diagnosis getting longer and longer, so many children and families are left in a state of limbo as they attempt to navigate the differences of living with children on the autism spectrum.

Our family support hubs, which do not require diagnosis for a child to attend, have been invaluable for families.

Family Support Hubs

Our Family Support Hubs are monthly meet ups for families and their children, aged under 12 in most cases, with or without a formal diagnosis of autism. Hubs are present across Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and a small number in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Our Mansfield Woodhouse hub is also our first teenage hub, and again, no diagnosis is required.

We also recently organised for families from many of the hubs to visit Circus Starr, the special needs circus, and the feedback from this was fantastic.

“X said she would give it a 9/10 because she didn’t have to talk to anyone if she didn’t want to and was allowed to play outside if it got too loud!”

“Just a note to say thanks to you for making us feel so welcome yesterday. Z really enjoyed himself and it was great to have a space for him to explore new toys and activities and spend some time with A who he hadn’t met before.



Zoom Workshops

We run 6 workshops on a rolling basis, one per month. The topics are as follows.

- INTRODUCTION TO AUTISM
- AUTISM AND GIRLS
- AUTISM AND SENSORY
- PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR
- AUTISM AND SCHOOLS
- AUTISM AND DLA

The workshops are run over zoom to enable anyone from any part of our catchment to attend, and they are run in the evening. Depending on the topic, we get between 25 and 60 attendees to each Zoom session.

“Just wanted to say thanks for the talk the other night. It was really informative. Lots of relevant information at a time that we need it.”

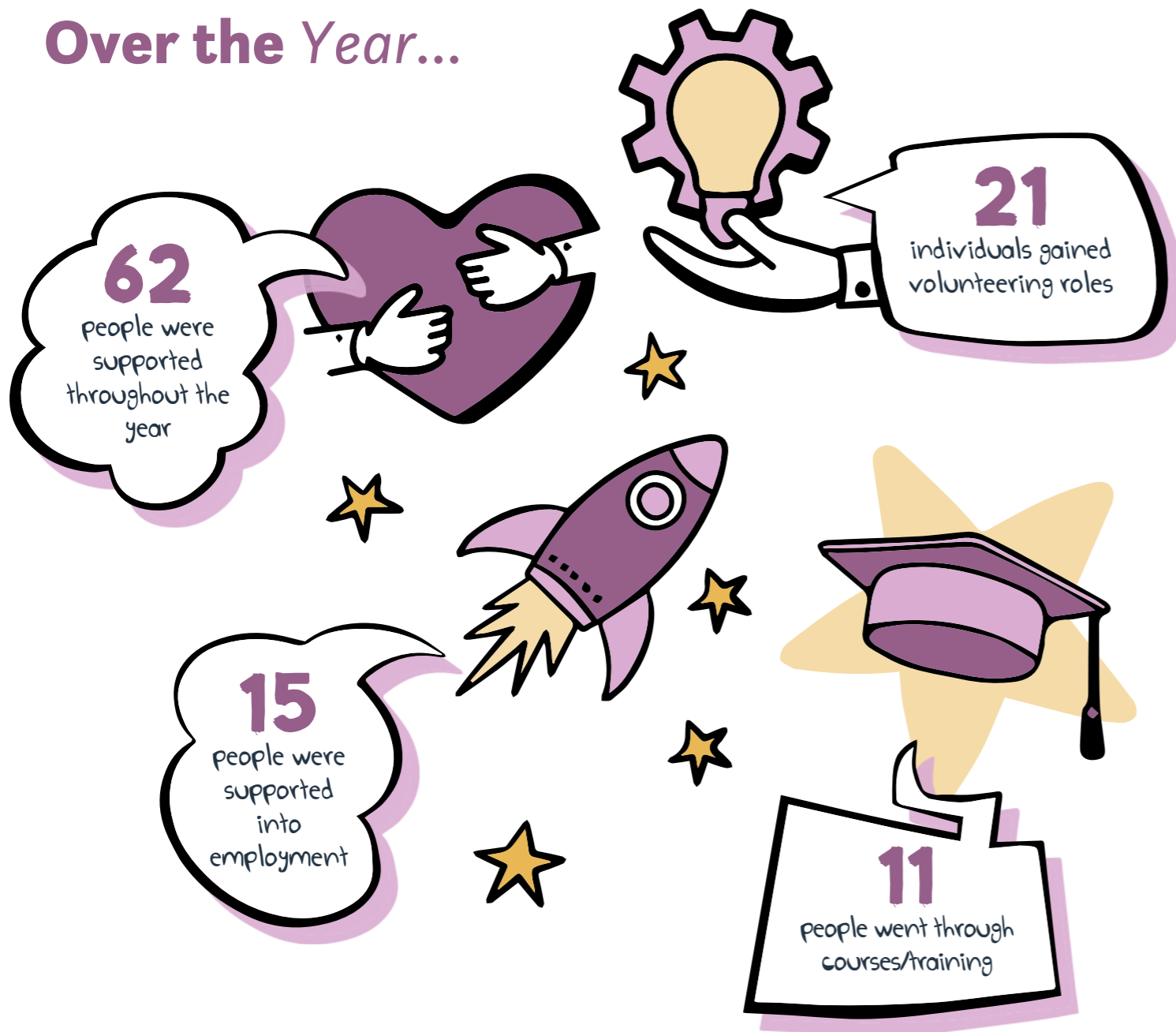
“I’m currently listening to your presentation on Autism in girls - my goodness everything you say I can fully relate to, I’m so glad I found you!!”

“Many thanks for this and all the support AEM provides.”



Employment Services

Over the Year...



Success Story

Alasdair Sydes, Computer Games tester

"I worked with AEM's Employment team from September 2022. In that time I was assisted in getting a work experience opportunity in at Bassetlaw Hospital. I was able to use this opportunity work out what I wanted in my career.

I wanted to work in the computer game industry and was helped to find roles in this area. I was assisted to tailor my CV to show my strengths and knowledge as well as interview techniques which led to me getting a position as a game's tester.

I feel like this is an area I will continue to progress in. I have been supported when looking into benefits that I qualify for to help support me. I would like to thank the employment coaches for all of their help."

The Employment Coaches breaking down barriers

When Kayleigh Owen first met with AEM's Employment Coach, she knew exactly what she hoped to achieve. She enjoyed cooking and baking and wanted to work in the food sector. However, getting an interview to secure her dream job was proving a major hurdle.

Completing job applications, attending interviews, and knowing just what to say to potential bosses were just some of the difficulties she faced. Like many autistic and neurodivergent jobseekers, Kayleigh is not on her own. Sadly, employment coaches at Autism East Midlands, Samantha Roberts and Oliver Mew hear stories like hers every day.

"Autistic people often face barriers not only getting into work but also staying in work and progressing," explained Samantha. "There are many who want to work and, with the right support, will thrive. However formal application processes and interviews are not always easy to navigate."

The Employment Team currently has a full quota of clients who have an autism diagnosis and need additional support to move into the workplace either in a paid or voluntary role. They are looking at jobs ranging from admin and waitressing through to journalism and accountancy.

"It's great to see people at the beginning of their journey and support them to succeed," said Samantha. The coaches provide the support that's needed whether that's help with putting together CVs or cover letters or finding work experience opportunities and exploring with them their passions so that they can find the right role for them.

As Employment Coach, Samantha has been supporting 36-year-old Kayleigh into work over the past 12 months.

"Kayleigh had always wanted to work in the food sector, but she wasn't having any luck getting her first break," she said. "She had been unemployed for some time and with nothing current on her CV, it was proving a major barrier for her to find work. She was finding it difficult for her to get her foot in the door."

The first step was to help Kayleigh access some formal training so that she could add it to her CV. AEM was able to help her access online training and Kayleigh has now achieved her Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification.

Samantha was also able to provide support when Kayleigh wanted to apply to work with family-run business, Frank Roberts Bakery. "I contacted them on her behalf to see if there was a possibility they would be willing to give her a temporary placement. Immediately they came back to me and invited me onto their site to discuss how they could help."

Samantha also accompanied Kayleigh to meet with the recruitment team, so that she could be there for support should Kayleigh need it. Kayleigh has now moved into a temporary paid role at the Heanor site, which enables her to gain valuable work experience and helping her on her journey to become a bakery operative.

"Kayleigh is cheerful and bright and has a brilliant work ethic," added Samantha. "She has a passion for cooking and her ambition has always been to work in a bakery and I'm thrilled that we have been able to support her so that she can begin to follow that dream."



Kayleigh Owen with Maria Severn

Our Team

Our staff are specialists in autism and share our desire to create a world which recognises, understands and values autistic people. In these pages, you will read a few staff stories, but there are countless examples across our services every day.

Sarah's Story



Sarah with Adam

“25 years later, I still love my job and the service users are what keep me going.”

Senior Autism Practitioner, Sarah Cordall celebrated a work anniversary milestone after working with Autism East Midlands for 25 years.

Sarah first joined the charity in 1998, initially working at the Whitegates support service in Worksop before moving to provide support in other Autism East Midlands services in the area. She has now come full circle, returning to Whitegates, which provides respite support to autistic adults whilst offering their families and carers the chance to take a break as carers.

“I found that it was a role that I could do around my family commitments when my kids were small,” explained Sarah of how she joined the charity.

Katie Threlfall, Manager at Whitegates, praised Sarah for providing exceptional support to our service users.

“Sarah is absolutely fantastic and brilliant at her job. She is always smiling and upbeat and brilliant to work with. She is very people-focused and is always bringing new ideas for ways to support our service users and offers the very best support for the people who stay at Whitegates.”

Reflecting on her many years in service, Sarah said:

“All these years later I still love my job and the service users are what keep me going. I love spending time with the people we support and each day is very different. And I know that what we do is making a real difference to people's lives.”

Ben's Story

“My colleagues have helped me to accept my diagnosis and learn about what makes me who I am.”

Ben, our Deputy Director of Adult Services, shares his experience since his diagnosis and how feeling accepted at work can make a huge difference.

Back in January 2021 I received my autism diagnosis. There, I've said it. It's taken me this long to get to the stage where I can write these words.

Even now I'm wary about saying it out loud because there's still a long way to go towards ending the stigma around autism.

When I received my diagnosis, sadly my experience was negative. People I was close to laughed in my face and overnight I was treated differently.

I was made to feel as though something was wrong with me. I was also exhausted from 'masking' who I actually was on a daily basis. While 'masking' and hiding away my autistic traits I wasn't being me and I wasn't being true to myself.

And now? Fast forward two years and I am in a work environment where I am fully accepted and supported to be the best I can be at work. My colleagues have helped me to accept my diagnosis and learn about what makes me who I am. I'm now able to be myself and have reduced the 'masking' of my autistic traits. It's only part of who I am.

When I was promoted to Deputy Director of Adult Services at AEM, it's wasn't something I ever thought about doing before the opportunity came up.

I had worked in the adult social care sector for several years before joining AEM in 2021. Years of work experience put me in good stead for the role and my autism diagnosis brings an extra layer to those skills. I have both an understanding of our support services, as well as personal experience of autism.

My own autism diagnosis isn't something I've shared with many people but it is getting easier to talk about. Things are beginning to change as we see more about autism in the media.

There's now a better understanding of how it affects people. Autism comes in different forms and affects autistic people differently. Every individual has their own challenges. Some may struggle in social situations, others may be oversensitive to noises or lights, while some face issues around anxiety. There are numerous ways it can affect people.

Acceptance is the next step.



Steph's Story

"I wanted to do something more rewarding."

Before joining Autism East Midlands, Steph led a very different life as a self-employed beautician, but after switching into care, she admits she's "never looked back."

Steph Moss is the manager of our Dukeries service in Worksop. Together with a team of support workers, they ensure the people we support are able to enjoy a wide range of activities and receive care and guidance to help them achieve their outcomes.

Steph tells us about her journey from beautician to day centre manager.

It's 9.15 in the morning but already a long queue is forming outside Steph's office. The corridor is a hive of activity as everyone gets set for the day ahead.

People gather, grabbing coats and bags, as they prepare for a day out and much talk and laughter echoes around. And then there's the sounds of the enthusiastic strumming of guitar strings from Kevin, who is sat by her office door.



"No two days are ever the same here," laughs Steph as she views the scene. "And I wouldn't want it any other way."

Before joining Autism East Midlands, Steph led a very different life as a self-employed beautician; her days filled with appointments for facials, manicures and eyelash and brow treatments.

"I wanted to do something more rewarding though and, honestly, I needed a stable, regular income," explained Steph.

"A friend, who worked in the care sector, suggested that I try support work. She thought I had all the right attributes. I applied to work with AEM and ten years later, here I am! I'm still here and I've not looked back."

"You'd think that my previous job was very different but actually my friend was right. They have similar skill sets. Being able to listen and having communication and interpersonal skills is key."

So Steph took the plunge and switched careers. She joined Autism East Midlands and, after completing a comprehensive training programme,

began her first role as a casual relief worker.

She went on to become a full-time member of staff at our day centre at Nottingham, commuting each day from her Worksop home. When she was offered the role of Assistant Manager at the Dukeries, she jumped at the chance and it wasn't long before she was promoted to Manager.

Steph continued: *"If you've a passion to support others, I would recommend a change in career and a move into care work. The days are varied and it's brilliant to see the positive impact that you can make on people's lives. Everything we do can make a difference."*

The centre enables people to pursue their interests and hobbies, from swimming and keeping fit to learning how to cook for themselves or taking on volunteer roles.

"Watching someone achieve something that they never, ever thought possible is beyond emotional. It's a brilliant feeling to see people progress and to live their best lives. It means so much. It never gets old. I love my job."



Thank You!

Pronto Rugby

The Pronto Rugby team, newly formed in 2023, have specifically set up to fundraise for both Autism East Midlands and a mental health charity since launching.

They have been continually raising funds for us through rugby matches, taking part in games and holding raffles.

Some of the team dropped into Sutherland House School to give us their donation of £1,000 to Autism East Midlands. Students loved hearing how the money was raised before they showed team members around the school.

Great Eastern Run

Trio of friends Ben Lee, George Finney and John Gray took part in the Great Eastern Run to raise money for Autism East Midlands.

The event, which attracted 5,000 runners, took participants on a 13 mile route through the city centre and the grounds of Peterborough Cathedral.

John finished the Great Eastern Run in 1 hour 56 minutes, Ben finished in 2 hours 5 minutes, and George crossed the finishing line 15 minutes later.

A mammoth £1,800 was raised between them on the day. But their efforts didn't end there. Ben, John and another friend of theirs, JJ Price, ran the London Marathon to raise even more funds for Autism East Midlands.

Shakespeare Martineau and Marrons

Two Nottingham businesses, law firm Shakespeare Martineau and planning, design and development consultancy Marrons, joined forces to support Autism East Midlands.

Andy Gore from Marron's climbed Mt Snowdon with his 10-year-old daughter, Florence, to raise funds. The duo trekked the 14.5km Llanberis Path to reach the mountain's summit in tough weather conditions - and managed to walk there and back within an impressive 6 hours.

Andy said: "Florence has autism and we regularly use and access Autism East Midlands' services, particularly its monthly family hubs. We wanted to give something back to the charity and climbed Snowdon together to do so!"



Levi shows Pronto Rugby around the school



The Great Eastern Run



Andy and Florence

Special thanks to:

Andrew Gore

Ben Lee

College Pines Golf Club

Eileen Burley

Elaine Palfrey

Ethan Maud

Florence Gore

George Finney

Guilder Foundation

Jean Wilson

Jill Bacon

JJ Price

John Gray

Jose Raygaza

Knights Solicitors

Lizanne Davies

Martin Wood and partner

Mr & Mrs Pearson

Mr & Mrs Clarke

Plough Pub

Pronto Rugby

Radcliffe-on-Trent Guides and Brownies

Roger Harcourt

Ron Palfrey

Stuart Macgregor at GXO Logistics

White Meadow Furniture Co.



Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees

K R Doble
G J Smith
T Ousley
R J C Woodford
R W Bell
J D Morgan (resigned 6 September 2024)
P Parr
R D Levy
M J McGuigan (resigned 7 March 2024)
S D Barnes (resigned 3 May 2024)
C L Sharpe (appointed 7 March 2024, resigned 3 May 2024)

Company registered number: 02053860

Charity registered number: 517954

Registered office:

Unit 31 Craggs Industrial Estate,
Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop,
Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ

Chief executive officer: Jane Howson

Independent auditor:

Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor Cubo Birmingham 4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX

Bankers:

Lloyds Bank Plc
4 Romulus Court, Leicester, LE19 1WL

Trustees' Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the group and company for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory

requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Policies and objectives

The charity exists to offer support and serve people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands and respond to changes in government policy and campaigns within the charity's strategic objectives.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

Our vision

A world which recognises, understands and values autistic people, and where they and their families receive the services and support they need throughout their lives.

Our mission

To advocate, provide and develop high quality services, information, and support, in partnership with others, for all those whose lives are affected by autism.

To recognise and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling autistic people to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence.

Strategic priorities

Our priorities for the next five years are as follows:

Quality

To ensure the continued improvement of the quality of our services by focussing on the following areas:

- Continuing the improvement of the environments within which we work and provide services to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our beneficiaries.
- All of our environments will be designed to minimise restrictions to individuals and maximise their independence.
- By becoming the employer of choice in our field, enabling us to recruit and train staff aligned with our values and skilled in working with autistic people.
- Ensuring the practice in all our services offers purposeful activity enabling individuals we support to maximise their independence in all areas of their lives.
- We will improve our measurement of and focus on person centred services and the delivery of meaningful outcomes for everyone accessing our support.
- We will understand our performance by utilising our quality assurance matrix informed by our review and audit processes.

Increasing the voice of autistic people

We will ensure that the 'voice' of autistic people (in whatever form that takes) is at the heart of everything we do by enabling people to fully participate in all planning and reviews that pertain to them and/or the service that they access.

By supporting autistic people to play a central role in our organisation, as employees, service users, in our performance management and governance.

We will systematically engage with service users in whatever way is most effective for them. We will use this ongoing dialogue to ensure that the

decisions we make, both large and small, are shaped by autistic people.

Evidence based support

We will continue to engage with the wider 'autism community' to ensure that we are engaged with the research agenda.

We will ensure that our delivery and interventions are evidence based – wherever evidence exists.

We will ensure that we keep ourselves informed of innovative practice and adjust our delivery in line with innovation.

We will further develop our digital training and resources and make them available to all staff..

Maximum impact

We will invest in our development of services that support autistic people to access work. We will do so in order to access greater resources, demonstrate models of effective practice and influence the national agenda around employment. We will do so as an organisation and also in partnership with others.

To increase participation of autistic people in paid employment

We will develop employment and employability services that enable autistic people that are new to the organisation to access support and develop opportunities for existing students and service users, including the development of social enterprises, micro social enterprises and self employment opportunities.

We will continue to grow the number of people accessing our support both in number and in geographic spread. This will include opening new or satellite services.

We will develop services that target autistic people with whom our contact is currently minimal and who are often isolated and find it difficult to find services that meet their needs. In particular, we will develop services that offer social opportunities and advice and guidance for adults without a learning disability.

Financial Review

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities and key performance indicators

In the prior financial year the charity took the unusual decision to pay a second pay rise and make a financial loss. The purposes of this decision were twofold, firstly to ensure staff could survive the cost of living crisis and secondly to improve recruitment and reduce agency use. Recruitment had been very challenging post pandemic and agency use had risen to an unprecedented level.

We saw that strategy work in this financial year and the rate of agency use reduce significantly, particularly in our adults services. We also saw the number of children in our school rise to 83 which meant that the with the spread of fixed overheads school became more financially robust.

Adults Services

More people were able to access our respite service in Worksop in this financial year.

Children's Services

Sutherland House School saw a significant increase in the number of children in its care during this year, rising to 83. We also saw the age profile of the children change, with many of the new students coming in at the primary stage. This is excellent news as it means that young people can have their autism needs met much earlier in their school careers, allowing them to thrive.

Students achieved 27 formal qualifications and a further 40 accreditations during the summer of 23.

Our Family Support Hubs moved towards becoming self funding during this year as grant funding had finished. We continued to support children and families across the East Midlands, with 12 Hub locations this year.

b. Factors relevant to achieve objectives

AEM continued to be a specialist autism service provider. This specialism is what makes our services so successful in meeting the needs of autistic people.

c. Investment policy and performance

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. Trustees have reviewed the investment policy this year. Our primary investments are in the ongoing development of new services so that we can support more people and in existing services in order to improve the quality of our offer.

We will maximise the return on any cash held in accounts by reviewing the best available interest rates.

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b. Reserves policy

Autism East Midlands takes a risk based approach to the setting of reserves. The objective of this policy is to provide a level of working capital that protects the continuity of the charitable objectives, provide a level of funding for unexpected opportunities and to provide cover for unforeseen risks.

The biggest mitigation against catastrophic loss calling on reserves is the fact that AEM has a very diverse service offer and is commissioned by multiple local authorities.

The levels of restricted and unrestricted funds is monitored and shared with Trustees on a monthly basis.

c. Surplus

A surplus of £2,873k (2023: surplus £9,999k) has been achieved in year. This includes a reduction to restricted funds of £7,000 (2023: £77,646 reduction).

The group had total funds of £9,700k as at 31 March 2024 (2023: £6,827k), consisting of £146k restricted funds (2023: £153k), £10,504k unrestricted funds (2023: £8,857k) and a pension deficit of £950k (2023: £2,183k deficit). Unrestricted funds in 2024 include a designation of £381k from the legacy of Eileen Burley which has been set aside for employment and social enterprise.

d. Material investments policy

The Memorandum and Articles of Association give the Trustees unrestricted powers of investment. The charity's current investment strategy is to deposit funds in short and medium term interest bearing accounts with UK banks.

e. Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risk across our services is the inflationary pressure on wages and utilities not matched by a rise in fee rates from local authorities.

While National Living Wage levels continue to rise very significantly, most local authorities did not agree to mirror this increase with sufficient uplift. After more than a decade of limited increases we are finding the de facto cuts in funding increasingly difficult to sustain in adults social care. Some services are coming very close to not achieving full cost recovery and some care packages are already at that point.

In Sutherland House School this has been offset to a degree by the cost spreading due to the increased number of children.

f. Material risk management objectives and policies

Autism East Midlands has sought to manage its financial risks through regular monitoring of its income streams and also seeking to make a wide range of cost savings.

g. Principal funding

The charity derives the majority of its income from the provision of services, together with grants and donations received for particular projects.

Autism East Midlands receives over 90% of its funding from government funded bodies. This includes Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Autism East Midlands were the beneficiaries of a large legacy from the estate of Eileen Burley in year. We are extremely grateful for the opportunities that this legacy gives us to expand on the aspects of our support that is not funded by statutory agencies.

Trustees have agreed to designate this funding to support the expansion of our employment support offer and to develop a social enterprise that will enable the employment of more autistic people.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, its charity number is 517954. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which sets out the objects and powers of the charity and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees (previously the Council of Management) are the Trustees for the purposes of charity law and the directors for the purposes of company law.

The principal object of the company and the group is to provide services to people with an autistic spectrum condition and their families and carers in the East Midlands.

b. Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Group and the Company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co opted under the terms of the Memorandum of Association.

c. Organisational structure and decision-making policies

During the year under review, the Trustees delegated the day to day running of the charity to the Executive Management Team.

The Board of Trustees delegates some areas of decision making to the following Committees:

- Sutherland House School Governing Body
- Audit and Finance Sub Committee

The Charity wholly owns two trading subsidiaries, Sutherland House (Trading) Limited and NORSACA (Trading) Limited which donate all their profits to the charity. The principal activity of Sutherland House (Trading) Limited is the provision of education services for children with autism or related conditions. NORSACA (Trading) Limited provides a range of residential and non residential care facilities for people with autism or related conditions.

d. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

Through the Trustees work within the Board Committee meetings and through their involvement with family members, Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. New Trustees are given a comprehensive

induction pack and training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. This training covers issues such as the responsibilities of the Trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework of the charity, the current financial position and reserves of the charity and any future plans and objectives. They are also given a range of informative literature detailing the services on offer. All Trustees are encouraged to visit the school and adult care centres on a regular basis and to take part in other organised activities.

e. Pay policy for key management personnel

The key management personnel of the charity are identified in Note 10 of the accounts and are responsible for directing, controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day-to-day basis. All directors give of their time freely and therefore none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in Note 11 of the accounts and related party transactions in Note 25.

The pay of senior staff is reviewed annually and normally increased in line with other staff, this year whilst most staff received a second pay rise this was not applied to anyone in a management position. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities of similar size. The remuneration benchmark is the midpoint of the range paid for similar roles adjusted for a weighting of up to 30% for any additional responsibilities. If recruitment has proven difficult in the past, a market addition may also be paid in order to attract and retain high calibre personnel, with the pay maximum no greater than the highest benchmarked salary for a comparable role.

f. Financial risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the company and the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the company and the group, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Risks are reviewed annually, and measures put in place to mitigate those of a higher grading.

Plans for future periods

Future developments

Autism East Midlands retains its ambition to develop an additional school in a different county. To this end after the year end AEM purchased the Old Rectory at Braithwell in South Yorkshire to open as a school.

The development of old Fire Station in Worksop was delayed due to issues with planning that have now been resolved. This will open in the next financial year as a new day service.

Members' liability

The Members of the Charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the Charity in the event of winding up.

Engagement with employees and employment of the disabled

Employees have been consulted on issues of concern to them by means of regular consultative committee and staff meetings and have been kept informed on specific matters directly by management. The Group and the Charity carry out exit interviews for all staff leaving the organisation and have adopted a procedure of upward feedback for senior management and the Trustees.

The group and the company have implemented a number of detailed policies in relation to all aspects of employment matters including:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Volunteers' Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

In accordance with the company and the group's Equal Opportunities Policy, the company and the group has long established fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of disabled staff. AEM prioritises the employment of autistic people as they are under represented in the workforce.

Full details of these policies are available from the company and group's offices.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Statement

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes 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. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the Charity and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and 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 Group and the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditor is aware of that information..

Auditor

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, was appointed by the Trustees as part of an open tender process.

The auditor, Cooper Parry Group Limited, has indicated his willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditor at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith

Trustee

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autism East Midlands (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial activities, the Consolidated balance sheet, the Charity balance sheet, the Consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of 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 Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the Group's 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 Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council'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 Group's or the parent charitable company'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.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

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.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report.

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes 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 Group's and the parent charitable company'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 Group or the parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of Autism East Midlands (continued)

Auditors' 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:

Our assessment focused on key laws and regulations the company has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Companies Act 2006, United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, employment law and relevant tax legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities. Our approach to detecting irregularities included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the entity's policies and procedures and how the entity has complied with these, and through discussions;
- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the entity and how the entity is complying with that framework;

- obtaining an understanding of the entity's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- designing our audit procedures to respond to our risk assessment; and
- performing audit testing over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias, specifically around amounts due to group undertakings.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also consider the likelihood of detection of fraud based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: 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 Auditor's 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 its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Kevin Hodgetts FCA (Senior statutory auditor)
for and on behalf of
Cooper Parry Group Limited
Statutory Auditor
Cubo Birmingham
4th Floor
Two Chamberlain Square
Birmingham
B3 3AX

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities incorporating Income and Expenditure Account For the year ended 31 March 2024

		Unrestricted Funds 2024	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
INCOME FROM:					
Donations and legacies	2	425	36	461	314
Charitable activities	4	3,543		3,543	3,456
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	11,908		11,908	10,513
Investments	5	9		9	4
Other Income	6	38		38	81
TOTAL INCOME		15,923	36	15,959	14,368
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities - subsidiary undertakings	3	9,610		9,610	10,926
Charitable activities	7	4,772	31	4,803	4,111
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		14,382	31	14,413	15,037
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)		1,541	5	1,546	(669)
Transfers between Funds	17	12	(12)		
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES)		1,553	(7)	1,546	(669)
Other recognised gains/(losses):					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	23	1,327		1,327	10,668
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		2,880	(7)	2,873	9,999
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
Total funds brought forward		6,674	153	6,827	(3,172)
Net movement in funds		2,880	(7)	2,873	9,999
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		9,554	146	9,700	6,827

Consolidated Balance Sheet As at 31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,078		7,722
			7,078		7,722
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	2,443		3,268	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,405		1,124	
		6,848		4,392	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,923)		(1,605)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			4,925		2,787
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			12,003		10,509
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,353)		(1,499)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			10,650		9,010
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23		(950)		(2,183)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			9,700		6,827
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds	17		146		153
Unrestricted funds:					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension asset	17	10,504		8,857	
Pension reserve	17	(950)		(2,183)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		9,554		6,674
TOTAL FUNDS			9,700		6,827

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Charity Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2024

			2024		2023
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	12		7,078		7,722
			7,078		7,722
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	5,385		3,957	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,246		847	
		6,631		4,804	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,706)		(1,474)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			4,925		3,330
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			12,003		11,052
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(1,353)		(1,500)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY			10,650		9,552
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23		(950)		(2,183)
TOTAL NET ASSETS			9,700		7,369
CHARITY FUNDS					
Restricted funds:	17	146		153	
Total restricted funds:	17		146		153
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds:	17	10,504		9,399	
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	17	10,504		9,399	
Pension reserve	17	(950)		(2,183)	
Total unrestricted funds	17		9,554		7,216
TOTAL FUNDS			9,700		7,369

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

G J Smith, Trustee

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£000	£000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities		3,167	(2,332)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets		518	443
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(404)	(1,112)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES		114	(669)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR		3,281	(3,001)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,124	4,125
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR		4,405	1,124

The notes on pages 20 to 44 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

Autism East Midlands is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in the United Kingdom. The address of its registered office is given on the Charity Information page.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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 Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism East Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity.

The significant accounting policies that have been applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the accounts of Autism East Midlands and all of its subsidiary undertakings ('subsidiaries').

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

1.3 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.4 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the Charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the Charity, can be reliably measured.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of

the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time of the Friends is not recognised and refer to the Trustees' Report for more information about their contribution.

Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset class and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Charity's accounting policies.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Charity which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

1.5 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Group; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

1.6 Expenditure

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 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 categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure arose.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to the costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable activities are costs incurred by the company in the delivery of its activities undertaken to further the purposes of the company, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

1.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the bases outlined below.

At each reporting date the company assesses whether there is any indication of impairment. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined to be the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	-	2% - 10% Straight Line
Vehicles & equipment	-	10% - 100% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	-	Over the shorter of the period of the lease or the useful economic life

Costs of repairs and maintenance to property together with the expenditure incurred bringing the buildings up to fire safety regulations are written off in the period to which expenditure is incurred.

The company continually replaces and updates existing equipment. The majority of this expenditure is on small items costing less than £3,000 and no detailed register, other than for IT equipment, of these is kept. All items costing under £3,000 are written off to repairs and maintenance in the period in which the expenditure is incurred.

1.8 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Consolidated statement of financial activities.

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

1.9 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Consolidated statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.10 Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The profits of the subsidiary undertaking are gift aided to Autism East Midlands.

1.11 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.12 Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.13 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

1.14 Government grants

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance-related conditions, there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

1.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.16 Pensions

Retirement benefits to some employees of the Trust are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a defined benefit funded scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Company in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

1.17 Irrecoverable VAT

The charity is registered for VAT, however due to the mixed nature of the supplies it makes, it has irrecoverable VAT arising due to partial exemption which is included in resources expended.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Donations	45	36	81
Legacies	380		380
Total 2024	425	36	461

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000
Donations	49	65	114
Legacies	200		200
Total 2024	249	65	314

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - NET INCOME FROM SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

The wholly owned subsidiaries, Norsaca (Trading) Limited and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited, are incorporated in the UK and pay all of their taxable profits to the charity by gift aid. Sutherland House (Trading) Limited provides education services for children with autism or a related condition. Norsaca (Trading) Limited

provides residential and day care services for adults with autism or a related condition. The charity owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of the subsidiary companies. A summary of results pre-distribution to the charity is shown below. The amount of gift aid from Sutherland House (Trading) Limited was £1,328k (2023: £130k). The amount of gift aid from Norsaca (Trading) Limited was £428k (2023: £NIL).

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - income	5,757	5,757	4,600	4,600
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - income	6,151	6,151	5,914	5,914
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited - expenses	(4,429)	(4,429)	(4,470)	(4,470)
Norsaca (Trading) Limited - expenses	(5,181)	(5,181)	(6,456)	(6,456)
	2,298	2,298	(412)	(412)

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Provision of services	3,543	3,543	3,456	3,456

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Bank interest	9	9	4	4

6. OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Other income	38	38	68		68
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund				14	14
TOTAL 2023	38	38	68	14	82

7. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Provision of services	4,772	31	4,803	3,972	139	4,111

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2024	Support costs 2024	Total funds 2024	Activities undertaken directly 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Provision of services	2,902	1,901	4,803	2,234	1,876	4,110

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000
Pension finance costs	102	322
Staff costs	9,060	7,982
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(7,134)	(8,275)
Agency costs	874	2,205
Total 2024	2,902	2,234

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (continued)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000
Staff costs	917	1,115
Depreciation	529	582
Other staff costs	196	154
Premises costs	1,079	907
IT costs	314	362
Legal & professional costs	132	226
Insurance costs	211	208
Travel costs	178	193
Other support costs	356	484
Office costs	214	85
Governance costs	33	25
Marketing costs	20	22
Catering costs	197	163
Costs recharged to subsidiaries	(2,475)	(2,650)
Total 2024	1,901	1,876

9. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Fees payable to the Group's auditor for the audit of the Group's annual accounts	19	20
Fees payable to the Group's auditor in respect of:		
All taxation compliance services not included above	3	1
All assurance services not included above	1	
All non-audit services not included above	4	

10. STAFF COSTS

	Group 2024	Group 2023	Company 2024	Company 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	8,710	7,760	8,710	7,760
Social security costs	732	702	732	702
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	415	388	415	388
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	120	247	120	247
	9,977	9,097	9,977	9,097

Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes have been restated in 2023 to remove the net interest charge on the local government pension scheme £331k as this does not represent a staff cost.

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	Group 2024	Group 2023	Charity 2024	Charity 2023
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Teaching staff	94	104	94	104
Care staff	279	231	279	231
Management and Administration	36	34	36	34
	409	369	409	369

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2024	Group 2023
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	1	
In the band £70,001 - £80,000		1
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	1
In the band £110,000 - £120,000		1
In the band £120,000 - £130,000	1	

The key management personnel of Autism East Midlands comprise the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Adult Services, the Director of Corporate Services, the Finance Director and Headteacher. The remuneration of key management personnel during the year totalled £437k (2023: £420k).

11. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023: £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2024, expenses totalling £526 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2023: £659 to 1 Trustee).

12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group and Company

	Freehold property	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Office Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost						
At 1 April 2023	10,237	257	25	1,020	518	12,057
Additions	285			66	53	404
Disposals	(656)					(656)
At 31 March 2024	9,866	257	25	1,086	571	11,805
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2023	3,223	257	25	830		4,335
Charge for the year	446			83		529
On disposals	(137)					(137)
At 31 March 2024	3,532	257	25	913		4,727
Net book value						
At 31 March 2024	6,334			173	571	7,078
At 31 March 2023	7,014			190	518	7,722

Freehold property cost at 1 April 2023 has been restated by £518k. The Worksop Firestation project costs have been reclassified to assets under construction as the assets were not available for use for charitable purposes at 1 April 2023.

13. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

Company investments in subsidiary companies totalled £6 at 31 March 2024 (2023: £6).

Principal Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of the company:

Company	Company number	Basis of control	Holding	Included in consolidation
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	08056114	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	03381476	Equity - share capital	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year were:

Company	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Profit / (Loss) for the year £000	Net assets £000
Norsaca (Trading) Limited	6,151	(5,181)	970	3
Sutherland House (Trading) Limited	5,757	(4,429)	1,328	51

14. DEBTORS

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	2,019	2,669	445	742
Amounts owed by group undertakings			4,603	2,857
Other debtors	49	13	21	13
Prepayments and accrued income	375	586	316	345
	2,443	3,268	5,385	3,957

15. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Bank loans	147	142	147	142
Trade creditors	231	565	231	449
Other taxation and social security	856	487	856	487
Other creditors	110	83	112	82
Accruals and deferred income	579	328	360	314
	1,923	1,605	1,706	1,474

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Bank loans	1,353	1,499	1,353	1,499

Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Between one and two years				
Bank loans	151	146	151	146
Between two and five years				
Bank loans	479	465	479	465
Over five years				
Bank loans	723	887	723	887

The aggregate amount of liabilities payable or repayable wholly or in part more than five years after the reporting date is:

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Repayable by instalments	723	887	723	887

Bank loans and mortgages are secured on the charity's freehold properties. The interest rates on the loans are 2.83% and 3.1% respectively and repayments are repayable monthly.

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
DESIGNATED FUNDS						
Designated Funds - all funds		381				381
GENERAL FUNDS						
General Funds - all funds						
All funds	9,399	3,634	(4,678)	1,768		10,123
Reserves -						
Subsidiaries	(542)	11,908	(9,610)	(1,756)		
Pension reserve	(2,183)		(94)		1,327	(950)
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	6,674	15,923	14,382	12	1,327	9,554

17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (Continued)

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7					7
Jones Trust - Science Lab	21			(4)		17
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	38					38
Wilson Foundation	4		(4)			
BNA Charitable Organisation	63		(17)	(8)		38
The Lady Hind Trust	3		(2)			1
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	14			(5)		9
John Eastwood Foundation	1		(1)			
Old Heanorians	2		(1)			1
Gilander Foundation-Children of Northampton		5				5
Wolfson Grant		31		(1)		30
Next			(6)	6		
	153	36	(31)	(12)		146
Total of funds	6,827	15,959	(14,413)		1,327	9,700

Designated funds - set aside for employment and social enterprise.

Parenting Fund represents a donation received to fund a program to assist and support the parents of autistic children and adults.

The National Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs fund represents a three year project facilitating the setting up of family support groups in the East Midlands.

Wilson Foundation - this fund provides trips in the Community to all young people irrespective of support needs.

Jones Trust - Science Lab represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards the capital cost of creating and equipping a science laboratory in our school.

Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden represents a contribution Jones Trust made towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Children in Need - Funding received from BBC Children in Need substantially contributes towards the running of the 'Out and About' programme in Northampton - a community based programme helping autistic children reduce isolation, build confidence and develop social and life skills through recreational and leisure activities.

BNA Charitable Organisation - Funding received from the BNA Charitable Organisation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Old Heanorians - This funding received from Old Heanorians is to support the Heanor Family Support Hub.

The Lady Hind Trust - Funding received from The Lady Hind Trust contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust - Funding received from Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust contributes towards the redevelopment of the school courtyard and garden at Sutherland House School.

John Eastwood Foundation - Funding received from John Eastwood Foundation contributes towards redeveloping the garden of a large building in Worksop (Whitegates) to be a centre for Autistic individuals in crisis.

Gilander Foundation - Children of Northampton - This represents a donation to support the children of Northamptonshire.

Wolfson Grant - To facilitate the refurbishment of a legacy property to become an education training house for our Autistic service users and school children.

Next - This represent a donation to provide equipment for the sensory room at the Hamilton Lodge Day Center

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General Funds - all funds	9,114	3,776	(3,638)	147		9,399
Reserves - subsidiaries		10,513	(10,926)	(129)		(542)
Pension reserve	(12,517)		(334)		10,668	(2,183)
	(3,403)	14,289	(14,898)	18	10,668	6,674
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Parenting Fund	7					7
Jones Trust - Science Lab	17			4		21
Jones Trust - Whitegates Garden	38					38
Wilson Foundation	9		(5)			4
Lottery - Autism Family Support Hubs	63		(63)			
Children in Need	18	37	(43)	(12)		
BNA Charitable Organisation	75		(5)	(7)		63
Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund		14	(14)			
The Lady HindTrust		3				3
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust		25	(8)	(3)		14
John Eastwood Foundation		1				1
Old Heanorians	3		(1)			2
TOTAL OF FUNDS	230	80	(139)	(18)		153
Total of funds	(3,173)	14,369	(15,037)		10,668	6,827

18. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Designated Funds		381				381
General Funds	6,674	15,542	(14,382)	12	1,327	9,173
Restricted funds	153	36	(31)	(12)		146
	6,827	15,959	(14,413)		1,327	9,700

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers in/out	Gains/ (Losses)	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Funds	(3,403)	14,289	(14,898)	18	10,668	6,674
Restricted funds	230	80	(139)	(18)		153
	(3,173)	14,369	(15,037)		10,668	6,827

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total funds 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Tangible fixed assets	7,019	59	7,078
Current assets	6,762	87	6,849
Creditors due within one year	(1,923)		(1,923)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,353)		(1,353)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(950)		(950)
Total	9,555	146	9,701

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£000	£000	£000
Tangible fixed assets	7,665	57	7,722
Current assets	4,296	96	4,392
Creditors due within one year	(1,605)		(1,605)
Creditors due in more than one year	(1,499)		(1,499)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(2,183)		(2,183)
Total	6,674	153	6,827

20. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Group	Group
	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Net income/expenditure for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	1,546	(669)
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation charges	529	582
Impairment of property valuation		13
Loss/(Profit) on the sale of fixed assets	1	(158)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	825	(2,334)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	172	(100)
FRS102 pension adjustments	94	334
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	3,167	(2,332)

21. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	Group	Group
	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Cash in hand	4,405	1,124
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	4,405	1,124

22. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	At 31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000
Cash at bank and in hand	1,124	3,281	4,405
Debt due within 1 year	(142)	(5)	(147)
Debt due after 1 year	(1,499)	146	(1,353)
	(517)	3,422	2,905

23. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Group operates a defined benefit pension scheme.

Retirement benefits to employees of the Group are provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The company is an admitted body of the LGPS, admitted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 March 2024 was £160k (2023: £269k), of which employer's contributions totalled £128k (2023: £235k) and employees' contributions totalled £32k (2023: £34k). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 22.3% for employers and 12.5% for employees.

Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and gains and losses on the settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Activities if the benefits have vested. If the benefits have not vested immediately, the costs are recognised over the period vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

Principal actuarial assumptions at the Balance Sheet date (expressed as weighted averages):

	At 31 March 2024	At 31 March 2023
	%	%
Discount rate	4.9	4.8
Expected return on scheme assets	2.95	2.95
Future salary increases	2.95	2.95

23. PENSION COMMITMENTS (continued)

	At 31 March 2024	At 31 March 2023
	Years	Years
Mortality rates (in years)		
for a male aged 65 now	20.4	20.7
at 65 for a male aged 45 now	21.7	22
for a female aged 65 now	23.3	23.5
at 65 for a female aged 45 now	24.7	25

Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 March 2024	At 31 March 2023
	£000	£000
Discount rate +0.1%	22,824	22,945
Discount rate -0.1%	23,573	23,704
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	23,982	24,117
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	22,434	22,551
Pension increase rate +0.1%	23,568	23,698
Pension decrease rate -0.1%	22,829	22,951

The Group's share of the assets in the scheme was:

	Fair value at 31 March 2024	Fair value at 31 March 2023
	£000	£000
Equities	14,164	13,105
Gilts	533	437
Corporate bonds	1,104	1,252
Property	2,365	2,509
Cash and other liquid assets	1,339	1,106
Inflation Plus	1,131	1,067
Infrastructure	1,608	1,661
Total fair value of assets	22,244	21,137

The actual return on scheme assets was a gain of £1,882k (2023: loss of £454k).

The amounts recognised in the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Current service cost	110	238
Interest on obligation	102	322
Administrative expenses	10	9
Total amount recognised in the Consolidated statement of financial activities	222	569

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Opening defined benefit obligation	23,320	34,409
Current service cost	110	238
Interest cost	1,101	887
Contributions by scheme participants	32	34
Actuarial gains	(565)	(11,618)
Benefits paid	(804)	(630)
Closing defined benefit obligation	23,194	23,320

Movements in the fair value of the Group's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£000	£000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	21,137	21,892
Interest income	999	565
Administrative expenses	(10)	(9)
Actuarial (losses)/gains	762	(950)
Contributions by employer	128	235
Contributions by scheme participants	32	34
Benefits paid	(804)	(630)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	22,244	21,137

24. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2024 the Group and the Charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2024	Group 2023	Group 2024	Group 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Not later than 1 year	94	211	94	211
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	7	78	7	78
	101	289	101	289

The Charity renewed their lease for Unit 31, Craggs Industrial Estate, Morven Street, Cresswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S80 4AJ in September 2024 for a further 10 years.

The following lease payments have been recognised as an expense in the Statement of financial activities:

	Group 2024	Group 2023	Group 2024	Group 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Operating lease rentals	211	134	211	134

25. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year, recharges from Autism East Midlands to Norsaca (Trading) Limited were £5,181k (2023: £6,455k) and recharges from Autism East Midlands to Sutherland House (Trading) Limited were £4,429k (2023: £4,470k).

As at 31 August 2024, Norsaca (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £2,488k (2023: £1,573k) and Sutherland House (Trading) Limited owed Autism East Midlands £2,114k (2023: £1,283k).

26. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

Autism East Midlands purchased The Old Rectory, Holywell Lane, Braithwell, Rotherham, S66 7AF on 11 April 2024 for consideration of £1.2m. The Charity plans to refurbish the property and open a new school.

Effective 1 December 2024, Derbyshire Autism Services Group merged with Autism East Midlands. Upon merger, Derbyshire Autism Services Group assets and liabilities transfer to Autism East Midlands and Derbyshire Autism Services Group ceases to operate as an individual entity.



AEM Autism East Midlands

For more information...

W aem.org.uk

T 01909 506 678

E enquiries@aem.org.uk



Autism East Midlands

Our achievements over the past year have been the result of the work of our dedicated staff, combined with the significant support of all our partners. If you would like to get involved in our work, we would love to hear from you.

This information can be provided in a more accessible format by contacting [**enquiries@aem.org.uk**](mailto:enquiries@aem.org.uk)

Registered office: Autism East Midlands, Unit 31 Craggs Industrial Estate, Morven Street, Creswell, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 4AJ

Registered charity no. 517954

Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England no. 2053860