



AXMINSTER CARE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

31ST MARCH 2024

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Charity are to relieve poverty and sickness and distress and to do all such other things beneficial to the Community by such legally charitable means as the Trustees shall think fit in the town of Axminster and in the surrounding Parishes.

The Activities of the Charity will include raising funds to support the Objectives of the Charity as stated above. This may include receiving donations and legacies, income received through the Charity Shop, Grants, Gift Aid, and Bank Interest Received. Other activities of the Charity will include the giving of Grants to individuals/families who are in need of financial or material support in times of crisis; the giving of Grants to local community groups, schools, churches, and other charities who are struggling to raise funds for projects that will be of benefit and have impact within our local community.

Requests for Grants for individuals are received by the Secretary via a third party such as a doctor, social worker, head of school, clergy etc. This is to ensure that the need is genuine. Material goods are provided by the Charity on behalf of the Client to ensure that their needs are met and funds are not misused. The Grant is issued upon agreement with all Trustees.

Requests for Grants received by groups, schools, churches, and other charities are received by the Secretary and are presented to all Trustees for consideration. The Trustees will consider how the Grant will enhance the community and people within, and whether this meets with the Charity's ethos.

Axminster Care Service has approximately forty-five volunteers across different areas of the service and include Volunteer Shop assistants/sorters who each work a few hours each day which helps to ensure that our Charity Shop is able to open six days per week. Volunteer Drivers who facilitate the transport service will work at least one day per week, ensuring that we are able to cover the demand for medical transportation. Volunteer Telephonists operate the telephone system and coordinate client transport requests and drivers, with each one working one morning per week for two hours.

Achievement and Performance

Despite the cost of living crisis the charity shop has continued to thrive, increasing its takings this year by over £14,000 compared to the previous year. This has partly been achieved by maximising the retail space within the shop premises. The shop continues to work with Axe Valley Community College in providing them with donated attire for their Prom Night, and this is working extremely well with over £1000 received last year for donated garments purchased. Themed window displays have also encouraged people through the door to have a look around, who wouldn't have otherwise done so.

The defibrillator, installed last year, has been actioned once but not used. This shows that there is a need for this type of facility in this part of the town.

Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service paid an unannounced visit to the shop premises in March this year and carried out a fire safety check. They reported that the premises were of reasonable standard of fire safety.

The Volunteer Drivers Team have continued with transporting people to and from medical appointments. An advertising campaign held during the year resulted in the recruitment of an additional 5 Drivers, which has made a positive impact on the provision of this Service. Difficulties remain with Drivers often taking holidays at the same time, restricting Driver availability over busy periods. Drivers were encouraged to take part in a driving assessment and of which 11 Drivers have taken up the offer. The assessment is designed to refresh Driver's knowledge of the Highway Code and boost their confidence. There were no reports of any of the Drivers being unsafe in their driving following their assessments.

The Volunteer Telephonist Team have continued to support the Drivers in coordinating client transport requests. There are always challenges to be met when trying to accommodate short notice client requests, particularly when a number of Drivers are on holiday at the same time. The introduction of a Hospital Visit Day was introduced this year, with a Driver taking clients specifically to RD&E Hospital to visit family for a fee of £10 per passenger, but as yet has only generated a small amount of interest.

The Douglas Hull Dyslexia Fund, set up last year, has been extended to include 'educational' funding for those in need of a little extra support in the classroom. Although the schools within our catchment area have been encouraged to come forward with funding requests the response has been very slow. The total amount of donations from this fund to date is £14,170.83. The Trustees will investigate visiting each school to talk about their individual needs, and it is hoped that this will encourage funding requests for educational support etc.

A small-scale advertising campaign was initiated during the year, with adverts and small editorials placed in the local parish magazines and the local Midweek Herald. This has increased awareness of both our Transport Service and our Grant giving for families.

Financial Review

For the year to 31st March 2024, we saw a continued increase in Charity Shop Sales mainly due to the optimisation of retail space. Client Transport Donations and Gift Aid had also increased, and this is mainly due to our Volunteer Drivers communicating with clients and reminding them that we operate as a Charity and that their donation will aid continuation of the Transport Service. Interest Received this year has seen a large increase, mainly due to the large donation received in the prior year and the improvement in interest rates.

Expenditure for the Charity has increased compared to the previous year, with Donations/Grants made from the General Fund and Dyslexia Fund totalling £56,152.89. Of this total, £45,332.06 was from the General Fund, with community groups, schools, families, and other charities being supported. Staff costs have increased for this year but have been offset by the increase in sales.

A review was conducted of our bank and savings accounts following the receipt of a large donation in the previous year. Three new accounts were set up during the course of the year in order to reduce any risk in holding large sums of money. This was also an opportunity to search

for the best interest rates and maximise investment. Currently the Charity Shop has its own Lloyds bank account with £197,946.27 held at the year end, as does the Treasurers Lloyds Account with £4834.71 held at the year end. A Lloyds Deposit Account holds £218,652.72 at the year end which is made up of donations received. Two COIF Accounts hold funds of £98,534.07 and £80,201.67, providing the Charity with a good rate of interest on funds invested. Three new accounts have been opened and sums deposited as follows: Nat West Account £49,988.00; Nat West Liquidity Account £122,618.46; Virgin Account £80,050.00. The total sum of funds held at the end of the financial year was £852,852.90. The Trustees will continue to review how funds are managed and invested with a view to maximising interest rates and maintain security of investments made.

Plans for Future Periods

Axminster Care Service will continue its current services of Grant giving and medical transport support to the community. The Charity will continue to look to increase awareness of its activities through further advertising initiatives over the next financial year. The Trustees will look to better communicate with the local schools, making them aware of the Dyslexia/Educational Fund and encouraging them to put forward funding requests. The Trustees will look to investigate funding platforms to maximise interest rates and safeguard finances.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Axminster Care Service Constitution is documented by a Deed of Trust and is consistent by Trustees incorporated as a body. Trustees are appointed from time to time depending on availability of current post holders and will be nominated by a Trustee and elected with agreeance of all existing Trustees.

Petitions for funding are received by the Secretary and are either discussed at a meeting of Trustees, or if the request is of some urgency, it will be distributed by email to Trustees for consideration. The decision to progress with a funding application will only take place with a majority of Trustees in favour of supporting the request.

Decisions relating to the day to day running of the Charity Shop are primarily the responsibility of the Shop Manager. Decisions relating to costs of maintenance and security of the Charity Shop will be discussed within Trustee meetings, or via email to all Trustees in the event of urgency.

Trustees are made aware of their responsibilities via information provided by the Government website. On election as Trustee, the appointee will have a settling in period where no defined responsibility will be placed upon them, and this will depend on the individual's character and business background. New Trustees will be provided with copies of policies held by the Charity as follows: Equality Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Social Media Policy, Financial Reserves Policy, Investing Charity Funds Policy & Procedures, Serious Incident Reporting, Privacy Notice for Employees and Volunteers incorporating GDPR.

Trustees will agree in committee any salary or salary review for the Shop Manager and Assistant Shop Manager, and this will be done on an annual basis. Trustees will look at the current financial climate, and comparison salaries for those in similar positions within the county.

Reference and Administrative Details

The name of the Charity is Axminster Care Service and can sometimes be referred to as ACS. Axminster Care Service is a UK registered charity, Charity No. 900144. The Address of the principal office is Axminster Care Service, South Street, Axminster, Devon EX13 5AD.

The names of the Trustees for the accounting period are as follows:

Chairman, Dr James Vann

Vice Chairman, Mr Mervyn D Symes

Secretary, Mrs Jaqueline Symes

Treasurer, Mrs Alison Hayward

Driver Coordinator, Mr Malcolm Laws

Mrs Thelma Collier

The Secretary, Mrs Jacqueline Symes, will have communications with the charity's lawyer Scott Rowe Solicitors, Axminster, who hold the Title to the property at South Street, Axminster. The Secretary will also manage the day-to-day activities of the Charity as at the date of this Annual Report. The Treasurer will manage the day-to-day finances of the Charity as at the date of this Annual Report, in liaison with Lloyds Bank Plc.

Administer Care Service (Reg. charity no 900144)

Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>Income</u>	£	£
Shop Takings	75,438.02	61,076.22
Client Transport donations	16,149.60	13,039.10
Donations	66,265.93	675,572.19
Gift Aid	681.86	333.25
Interest received	15,386.25	2,679.17
	<u>173,921.66</u>	<u>752,699.93</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Donations	56,152.89	16,165.00
Client Expenses	-	2,191.83
Transport costs	16,037.79	15,022.40
driving assessments	270.00	-
Advertising	485.50	109.99
Heat and light	2,372.49	2,532.90
Telephone	769.07	634.89
Water and rates	170.66	50.00
Insurance	1,775.11	1,466.01
Shop maintenance	3,289.36	7,824.84
Shop supplies	1,462.21	1,405.02
Shop cleaning and waste	1,584.00	1,878.00
Card charges	429.60	184.47
Staff costs	29,371.08	22,888.98
Administration	860.64	2,095.78
Defibrillator	1,211.00	-
Christmas Party	842.35	-
Remembrance wreath	20.00	-
	<u>117,103.75</u>	<u>74,450.11</u>
SURPLUS for the year	<u>56,817.91</u>	<u>678,249.82</u>
SURPLUS in previous year		

Axminster Care Service (Reg. charity no 900144)

Balance Sheet at 31st March 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	£	£
<u>Buildings</u>		
Property at cost	<u>65,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>Cash at bank</u>		
COIF Charities Deposit Fund Account	98,534.07	93,965.94
COIF Charities Deposit Building Fund Account	80,201.67	2,000.06
Shop Bank account	197,946.27	121,103.19
Treasurers Account	4,834.71	13,045.62
Lloyds Deposit	218,652.72	630,893.18
Nat West account	49,988.00	-
Nat West Liquidity	122,618.46	-
Virgin account	80,050.00	-
	<u>917,825.90</u>	<u>861,007.99</u>
<u>Funds</u>		
Unrestricted Funds brought forward	861,007.99	182,758.17
Surplus/Deficit for the year	56,817.91	678,249.82
	<u>917,825.90</u>	<u>861,007.99</u>

Signed A Hayward

A Hayward FMAAT MICB
Treasurer

Four Ashes Accountants

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees of Axminster Care Service, charity no 900144

On accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024, as set out on pages 1 to 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

Signed:



Simon Hyett

Four Ashes Accountants

Owl Cottage, Stoke Abbott, Beaminster, Dorset, DT8 3JU

Association of Accounting Technicians Licenced Accountant