

Trustees' annual report and accounts

Directors' report and financial statements

Year ended: 31 March 2015

Accept difference. Not indifference.



Contents

From the Chair of the Board of Trustees	4
Directors' report	7
Strategic report	12
1. Activities, achievements and performance – the year in review and looking ahead	12
2. Financial review	35
Statement of Trustees' responsibilities	40
Independent auditor's report to the members and Trustees of The National Autistic Society	41
Summary of our achievements	44
Accounts	46
1. Consolidated statement of financial activities	46
2. Balance sheets	48
3. Consolidated cash flow statement	49
4. Notes forming part of the financial statements	50



Registered as a charity in England and Wales - CR269425. Registered as a charity in Scotland - SC039427.
A company limited by guarantee, registered in England - No.1205298. Registered office 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG.

Other working names registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales: **Autism UK** and **Action for Autism**.

From the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the CEO

This year was the first in The National Autistic Society's new five-year strategy to help everyone on the autism spectrum lead the life they choose.

In this report, you will find out more about how the NAS has worked to deliver and extend access to excellent education and adult services, supported professionals to understand autism better, and sought to achieve social change while standing as a partner for life for individuals and families affected by autism.

The NAS adult services grew by over 4% and developed a range of residential and community support including new one-stop shops to help adults in Scotland.

With all NAS schools which were inspected achieving Good or Outstanding features according to Ofsted, the new ground-breaking free school in Reading formed an exciting partnership with Fujitsu to enable more children to gain from digital skills and access. Our second free school opened its doors in January, providing much-needed specialist education to up to 63 children in Cheshire East.

The NAS has worked tirelessly with branches and local campaigners to make more communities autism-friendly and to champion the best possible support for people on the spectrum

at national and local government levels, with our profile in Parliament exceeding that of most other charities.

Through our digital-first advice and telephone helpline, the NAS has continued to support millions of people when they've turned to us for practical advice, information and expertise, an area of work entirely dependent on charitable support.

None of this would have been possible without the help of our volunteers, supporters and partners, including local authorities who invest in good autism services, campaigners and hundreds of volunteers who help to run our local branches and our direct support programmes as well as acting as advisers, Councillors and Trustees.

Thousands of people across the country came together to brave night walks, don onesies and run marathons to raise funds to make our work possible and to make the first World Autism Awareness Week exceed all targets and provide an important platform for the future.

Thank you all for your dedication, passion and support to each other. Thanks are also due to our 3,500 staff, who work directly with people on the spectrum in schools and services, and who provide all the systems and expertise the NAS needs to operate ever more efficiently and effectively.



We know there is much more to do and the NAS is determined to continue to increase our impact further, inspired still by the legacy of our founders, including the late Dr Lorna Wing, whose lifelong passion, humility and intelligence in the quest to understand autism better and increase the support and choices available to people on the autism spectrum we celebrated this year.

In the coming year, we will be seeking to do even more to increase public understanding of autism, encouraging more businesses, venues and communities to work to become autism-friendly and continuing to press for better implementation of the *Autism Act*.

We will invest further in new systems and technology so that we can provide information and advice at the right time to the two million people affected by autism in the UK, rather than waiting until there is a crisis.

We will open four autism centres attached to mainstream schools in Surrey to improve children's access to education, and put our plans into action for more school places in London.



Carol Homden

Dr Carol Homden, CBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees

We will continue to drive forward innovation in adult and community services, creating more local links and valuable, enterprising activities for people with autism wherever possible.

And we will work more with professionals in the criminal justice sector in particular to make sure that people on the autism spectrum are appropriately supported, as well as with employers so that more people on the spectrum can find rewarding jobs.

To support all our activities and to act as a knowledge hub, our Centre for Autism is focusing on building further evidence of impact and introducing a new Autism Education Programme for all our staff so that we are always at the leading edge in autism practice and understanding.

Together we can make sure that many more people on the spectrum and their families receive the support they need and live rewarding and fulfilling lives. Thank you for your support in achieving so much this year – we look forward to an even more exciting year ahead.



Mark Lever

Mark Lever
Chief Executive

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

THIS YEAR WE HAVE...

SECURED

£4.5 million

of Department of Health investment for autism projects, following our Push for Action campaign.

HELPED

16,000

people through our helpline and

4.4 million

people through our website.

EDUCATED OVER

490

children on the spectrum in our schools.

SUPPORTED OVER

1,700

autistic adults through social care services.

INFORMED

9,039

professionals through conferences and training.





Directors' report

Structure, governance and management

Constitutional structure

The National Autistic Society (NAS), first **registered as a charity** in 1962, was incorporated in 1975 as a **company limited by guarantee**, and is registered as such.

The services that we provide in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are managed from **local offices** that use the working names NAS Scotland, NAS Cymru and NAS Northern Ireland. Our national office addresses are given on the back cover of this report.

We are a **membership organisation**, with over 20,000 voting members (up from 19,170 on 31 March 2014). Members can contribute to the work and success of the NAS in many ways: by leading a local branch, by contributing their experiences through surveys and consultations, by fundraising at a local level and by spreading information about autism. Members who want to be active in their local area can join or set up a branch, operating under the name and charity number of the parent body. Members can also stand for election to our council. As of 31 March 2015 there were 107 branches (up from 100 on 31 March 2014) across the UK.

The NAS owns a number of **subsidiary companies**, of which three are currently active: NAS Services Limited through which we provide child and adult services, Autism UK Limited through which we trade Christmas cards, merchandise and sponsorship

of conferences and events, and NAS Academies Trust through which we provide our free schools. The latter is a majority owned subsidiary while the others are wholly owned.

A list of all subsidiary companies is shown within the notes to the accounts (page 56).

Charitable objects and public benefit

Our formal objects are: 'the development, delivery and promotion of the education, health, welfare, care and support of people with autism and related conditions ("people with autism").

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 (4) of the *Charities Act 2011* by referring to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aim and objectives of the Society and in planning its future activities.

The opportunity to benefit is not restricted by any constraint other than our capacity to provide an activity or service in a particular geographical location. It is not restricted by gender either. The education and care services we provide are outside the funding capacity of all but a very few families. Those fees are almost invariably fully paid, directly or indirectly, by the state.



These activities are either provided directly for the benefit of people on the autism spectrum or indirectly through supporting their parents, carers or advocates.

Under the law of Scotland, the NAS is established for the public benefit through:

- advancement of education
- advancement of health
- relief of those in need through age, ill health or disability.

The Council

NAS members elect a council of 42 Councillors. They act as a sounding board for the Trustees on major issues and engage with regional management and branches as well as serving on some committees and working parties.

Councillors normally hold office for a term of four years and may stand again for re-election for as many terms as they wish. There are two categories of Councillor: national (14 Councillors) and regional (28 Councillors). Members in each of the 12 geographic regions of the UK elect two or three Councillors. National Councillors are elected by the whole membership. The Council then elects from amongst their number up to half the Board of Trustees (the Board of Directors under company law), the maximum number of Trustees being 16.

The Board of Trustees

The Council elects up to eight members of the Council as **charitable Trustees**. Our Trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing our charity, ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.

The Trustees elect from their number the **Chair of Trustees** and one or more Vice Chairs.

During the year a skills audit was completed by all Trustees and reviewed by the Chair. The resulting action plan will be implemented during 2015/16 to address any identified individual development needs or overall skills gaps.

We run a Trustee induction programme for all newly appointed Trustees to include a comprehensive *Trustees' manual*, briefings with members of the Senior Management Group and meetings with the Chairs of the relevant Board Committees to which they are affiliated.

The Board of Trustees may appoint up to **eight non-Councillor members** of The National Autistic Society as Trustees. This helps to maintain a good mix of experience and expertise, covering commercial business, local government management, secondary and further education, special needs teaching, marketing, accountancy, organisational and financial management and, of course, personal and family experience of autism. Trustees hold office for a term of four years and may stand for re-election provided they do not serve for longer than eight years in aggregate (12 years if the Chair of Trustees or Chair of a Board Committee).

The Board of Trustees also appoints the **Chief Executive**, who is accountable to the Trustees for the day-to-day management of the charity, and for implementing strategic policy approved by the Trustees. The Chief Executive is salaried and not a Trustee. No Trustee has any financial interest in the charity or in its subsidiary companies. No Trustee receives any remuneration for his or her services as a Trustee, but may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses.





Trustees meet formally as a body four times a year, but all Trustees are also involved in one or more standing Board committees, which each meet several times a year (see the next section, **Decision-making**).

Trustees also attend the meetings of the Council (whether or not they are Councillors) and general meetings of members (all Trustees must be subscribing members of the charity). All Trustees submit to an enhanced disclosure check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously Criminal Records Bureau) on being elected and every three years thereafter whilst they remain a Trustee.

Decision-making

Having approved the annual budget (reflecting the strategic plan), the Board of Trustees delegates policy implementation and day-to-day management to the Chief Executive. Outcomes are monitored through a structure of committees of Trustees acting under terms of reference delegated by the main Board. The Governance Committee, consisting of the Chair of Trustees, the Chairs of the other committees and the Senior Councillor, acts as a remuneration committee (for staff, particularly senior staff, salaries and performance appraisal) and as a nomination committee (for Trustee and senior staff appraisal and succession planning).

Management of the charity

The activities of the NAS are managed by the Chief Executive, supported by a strategic management group of eight Directors, who lead the

functional activities: the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Executive; the Director of the Centre for Autism; the Director of Finance and Resources; the Director of Fundraising and Marketing; the Director of External Affairs and Social Change; the Director, Scotland; the Director of Human Resources and a new role, Director of Governance, introduced in July 2015.

Diversity

The NAS continues to be committed to providing quality services, striving to ensure equal opportunities and diversity in employment and service delivery. This includes seeking to employ individuals based on their skills and talent, and ensuring no one experiences prejudice as a result of a seen or hidden disability, in particular people on the autism spectrum. We have continued to involve people with autism in staff recruitment and a regular review of the accessibility of recruitment processes and practice for people on the autism spectrum remains high on our agenda. We continue to roll out the mentoring support programme to autistic employees, as well as support programmes for managers geared towards providing a better understanding of how to support individuals with a seen or hidden disability in the workplace.

We continue to regard staff wellbeing, staff engagement and staff development as high priorities. The Strategic Management Group remains committed to each of these strands of work and through a range of channels – including the use of a Joint Staff Consultative

Forum (a forum of staff representatives from across all areas of the charity) – staff are encouraged to be active partners in operational and strategic discussions and in shaping the outcomes of key people-related projects.

Honorary offices

The NAS benefits from a Royal Patron, a President and a number of Vice Presidents. Vice Presidents are people who have served and continue to serve the charity voluntarily in a range of important ways.

The NAS Patron, **HRH The Countess of Wessex** has been our charity's Royal Patron since August 2003. This year, she attended our Professional Conference and talked to many people working in the field of autism.

Our President **Jane Asher** once again hosted our Christmas concert, 'Stars Shine for Autism' and our Professional Conference in Harrogate. She also visited Radlett Lodge School for their fortieth anniversary celebrations and attended a concert by NAS cultural ambassador, the pianist Noriko Ogawa. For World Autism Awareness Week, she modelled our 'Stand Out For Autism' t-shirt and launched our Pink and Purple Bake Off with her own cupcake recipe. Our thanks go to Jane for continuing her wonderful work as the figurehead of our charity.



Key volunteers, staff and advisers



Patron: Her Royal Highness
The Countess of Wessex



President: Jane Asher

Vice Presidents:

Elizabeth, Baroness Astor of Hever
Dr Gillian Baird OBE MA, MB,
BChir, FRCP, DCH
Professor Simon Baron-Cohen
Rt Hon John Bercow, MP
Sally Bercow
Baroness Browning of Whimble
Peter Cullum CBE
Simon Cullum
Rebecca Daley
William Elliot
Professor John Dickinson
David Downes
Judy Lusty
Dr Christopher Mason MBE
Richa Sethia
John Swannell
Marianne Swannell
Baron Touhig of Islwyn and
Glansychan

Trustees:

Dr Carol Homden CBE, Non-
Councillor Trustee, Chair of
Trustees
Krishnaswamy Murali, Non-
Councillor Trustee, Vice Chair
Judy Berkowicz, National
Councillor
Clare Beswick, National Councillor
Dr Sophie Castell, Regional
Councillor, Greater London
Felicity Chadwick-Histed, Regional
Councillor, Greater London

Janet Corcoran, Regional
Councillor, East Midlands
Stephen Davies, Non-Councillor
Trustee
Peter Davis, Non-Councillor
Trustee
David Harbott, Non-Councillor
Trustee
Kevin Healey, Regional Councillor,
West Midlands
Sylvia Johnson, Non-Councillor
Trustee
Ash Merchant, Non-Councillor
Trustee
Pamela Reitemeier, Regional
Councillor, East Anglia
Mike Stanton, Senior Councillor

Chief Executive:

Mark Lever

Strategic management group:

Jacqui Ashton Smith, Education
Hannah Barnett, Adult Services
Kelly Evans, Finance
(from 1 July 2015)
Alastair Graham, Fundraising
and Marketing
Paul Harper, Finance and
Resources (to 30 June 2015,
Director of Governance from
1 July 2015)
Jane Harris, External Affairs and
Social Change (from January 2015)

Amanda Batten, External Affairs
and Social Change (until 23 April
2014)

Mark Milton, Chief Operating
Officer and Deputy Chief Executive
Jenny Paterson, Scotland
Carol Povey, Centre for Autism
Wande Showunmi, Human
Resources

Solicitors:

Andrew Lutley, Springfield
Rookery Hill, Ashtead Park,
Ashtead, Surrey KT21 1HY
Clifford Chance London, 10 Upper
Bank Street, London E14 5JJ
Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP,
134 Edmund Street,
Birmingham B3 2ES
Trowers Hamlin London,
3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ

Company secretary:

Paul Harper (from 1 July 2015)

Banker: Barclays Bank PLC, One
Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Auditor: Crowe Clark Whitehill
LLP, St Brides House, 10 Salisbury
Square, London EC4Y 8EH

Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP has
indicated its willingness to be
reappointed as statutory auditor.



Strategic report

Part 1: Our vision, achievements and the year ahead

The National Autistic Society was founded in 1962 by a group of friends who were frustrated by a lack of understanding and help for their children and families. Today we are the leading charity for people affected by autism and operate across the UK.

Our vision

Our vision is to achieve a world where all people living with autism get to lead the life they choose.

To achieve this goal, we undertake four main areas of work:

- achieving better public understanding and local and national policy (see **Achieving social change** on this page)
- supporting people through high-quality information, advice and connections to others who have experience of autism (see **Partner for life** on pages 14 to 19)
- running pioneering autism-specific schools and services (see **Providing excellent schools and adult services** on pages 19 to 23)
- educating professionals about autism and best practice (see **Supporting professionals** on pages 23 to 25)

Achievements and performance

Achieving social change

Too many people on the autism spectrum are unable to live the lives they choose due to the ignorance of the public, public services and businesses about autism and the lack of practical support from the NHS, schools and local councils.

Through our social change work, we aim to make more public venues, businesses and the public understand how to be autism-friendly. We also want to support more people affected by autism to work together to secure better services from local councils and the NHS, and get the best possible national policy and legal rights for people on the spectrum.

Autism-friendly spaces

This year, we worked directly with more than 20 public venues to help them become more autism-friendly. Thousands of people attended autism-friendly performances we supported, from Disney's *The Lion King* and Christmas pantomimes to *War Horse* and *Matilda the Musical*. In Scotland we've been working with Glasgow IMAX to organise autism-friendly cinema sessions for local people on the spectrum.



Autism-friendly performance: Disney's *The Lion King*



After our first performance of *The Lion King*, one mother attending the show with her children said: **“For a few hours, our children and family members were free to be themselves.”** We’re proud to have supported many more people to feel that freedom this year.

We welcomed our first ever theatre, hospital and football club to our **Access Award**: congratulations to Theatre Royal Newcastle, Macclesfield General Hospital and Queens Park Rangers. We have started work on extending the scheme to pharmacies, dentists, opticians, GP surgeries, restaurants, libraries, an airport and leisure centres – everywhere that people on the spectrum might want to go.

The (now former) Minister for Care and Support, Norman Lamb MP, helped to launch *My hospital passport*, a short booklet designed to help people on the autism spectrum communicate their needs to medical staff when they are admitted to hospital. NAS Vice President, Baroness Angela Browning, developed the passport together with medical professionals, autistic adults and their families and carers. The project was backed by the Department of Health and NHS England, and is referenced in the adult autism strategy *Think Autism*.



World Autism Awareness Week campaign

We got the wider public to understand autism better. Our media coverage during **World Autism Awareness Week** helped to educate 28 million people, with our Chief Executive appearing on the BBC Breakfast sofa alongside Robyn Steward, who talked about her own experience of autism.

Improving local support

We’ve piloted a new ‘**community organising**’ approach to help branches develop stronger relationships with local decision-makers, public services and the wider community.

Thanks to the dedication and energy of branches and campaigners around the country, we have managed to improve local services despite the difficult environment.

Together with staff and local campaigners, our Haringey branch **reversed £5.7 million of proposed cuts**, protecting the care packages of people on the spectrum. In Essex, we have worked with local campaigners and the local NHS to develop a brand-new diagnostic service to reduce waiting times.



Bring Maisie Home campaign

In Cambridgeshire, the Clinical Commissioning Group is now running a proper investigation into diagnostic services. And we’ve also worked with campaigners beyond our charity, for example we supported the **Bring Maisie Home campaign** to make more people aware of the need for better services in Hull.

The best possible policies

Local support often comes as a result of the decisions and funding given by national governments.

So in England, we have continued our work to make sure the ground-breaking Autism Act drives better support for people on the spectrum by:

- Working with the Department of Health to update the **Autism Strategy**. Autism is now specifically mentioned as an area Health Education England must look at when designing training for GPs and other health professionals.
- Making **guidance for local councils on autism** stronger. Due to our work, local councils have to do more to support people on the spectrum.

- Helping more people on the spectrum to qualify for care services. When the new proposals on care were first published, people who need prompting to do daily activities like eating and getting dressed seemed to have been forgotten. As a result of our **Careless campaign** and the support of thousands of our supporters, their needs are now part of the legally binding guidance.



Careless campaign

i'm One
of **2.8 million**
people who has someone
with autism in my family.

And I'll be voting.



I'm One campaign

To get even better autism policies in the future, we have supported people affected by autism to tell their story to prospective MPs. Our **I'm One campaign** has seen 1,000 of our supporters pledge to meet local candidates. MPs themselves have told us that this has made a real impression on them.

In Wales, we have secured support for an autism act, with 3,000 people signing the **Act Now petition** and a third of Assembly members meeting us. The Health Minister has asked for more information about the benefits of a specific autism act ahead of the 2016 Assembly elections.

In Scotland, our **Count Us In campaign** has influenced the national autism strategy and almost all councils now have local autism strategies, helping to join up support. A new online database of services is prompting more local councils and health boards to develop post-diagnostic care. Six new one-stop shops for autism, two of which we are directly running, are signposting people to local services from employment to social care, rather than being passed around the system.

In Northern Ireland, we have worked with the Department of Justice and the Institute of Legal Studies to make sure that more lawyers and judges understand autism. In addition, we have made sure that the needs of school children with autism were included in the recent review of school transport.

Partner for life

Being diagnosed with autism, preparing for adulthood or moving into later life can be confusing and traumatic times for people on the spectrum and their families. We aim to be a trusted partner at these times, providing practical and emotional support based on over 50 years' experience of supporting people on the autism spectrum.

A starting point for autism

Very often, people's first port of call after getting a diagnosis of autism is our **Autism Helpline**. We help people at all stages of their lives – from adults who have been diagnosed later in life and want to know what support is available, to parents who think their child may be on the spectrum and need help to get a specialist assessment.

This year we answered almost 16,000 enquiries to our helpline – this is a slight drop from 18,000 in 2013-14, as some of our resources were spent in reorganising the service. We want to make sure that we are prepared for the continuing high demand for this vital service and therefore began to recruit and train volunteers to help with routine requests. This new model will help to increase the number of enquiries we can answer and our speed of response. We know that autistic adults and families who contact us are often highly dependent on our ability to provide a quick reply. We have trained and will be supervising 27 skilled volunteers to complement our professional staff, enabling us to give more people the advice and information they need.

Our **website** continues to provide invaluable support to people affected by autism in the UK and all over the world. Last year we had 4.4 million unique visitors, an increase of almost 20% in twelve months.

“Your support is immeasurable in so many ways to so many families.”

Family member

This year, our **EarlyBird team** trained 275 new licenced users, both in this country and abroad. This has meant that 2,153 families have received the expert support they need after getting a diagnosis to be able to better help their child.

“The courses you provide are amazing, they really do help in understanding how a child with autism sees the world. Without my attendance I feel life would be considerably more difficult for our family. Thank you.”

Family member

The first steps towards a diagnosis can be particularly difficult for some groups. For example, the signs of autism in girls and women are often more subtle than those for boys and men. At our specialist diagnostic and assessment centre, the **Lorna Wing Centre for Autism** in Bromley, we have continued to provide in-depth diagnostic and specialist assessments needed due to the complexity of people's presentation. This year we undertook 56 specialist diagnostic assessments, up from 45 in 2013-14, of which 23 were female.

Providing lifelong support

As people's lives develop, more specialist advice and support may be needed, on topics from finances to school and housing options. Our specialist advisers gave in-depth advice and information on 1,490 enquiries about benefits (685 last year), 645 enquiries about community care (309 last year) and 2,467 enquiries about education (2,215 last year).

Our behavioural advisers worked with over 400 families throughout the year.

“It has helped tremendously to be reminded that we are not alone, thank you so much.”

Family member

In England, thanks to funding from the Department for Education, our **school exclusions service** continues to offer advice and information to parents of children and young people with autism on all aspects of school exclusion. The DfE have agreed to continue to fund the service for 2015-16. We have also worked with eight other charities, including Mencap, Scope and KIDS to create **SENDirect**, a new web resource. Launched in 2015, SENDirect simultaneously allows families to find the activities and support to fit their preferences, lifestyle and budget and service providers to extend their offer to a wider audience. Finding the right after-school club, holiday cottage, personal assistant or childcare shouldn't be a full time job – but parents tell us it is. SENDirect wants to change this forever.



Joe Sloane is our volunteer of the year.

Joe supports pupils at three secondary schools in West Dunbartonshire as part of our partnership with the Scottish charity Cornerstone.

Joe has supported pupils with autism to do activities they never thought possible. Joe volunteers for three hours every week and as a result of his help, pupils are taking huge steps forward. One boy is now able to use public transport and another is overjoyed that he can go to McDonald's with his friends.

One parent of a pupil Joe supported said **"I think Joe is just fantastic!** He is so relaxed when working with my son. He makes him feel comfortable in the group but very grown up too!"



Volunteer of the year, Joe Sloane

We have expanded our family support service in Monmouthshire and Newport to reach more families in need of autism-specific support. We now support 660 families and individuals as well as 110 professionals, ranging from school nurses to specialist clinicians and social workers. We've made 83 home and clinic visits, giving advice and information on behaviour management, sensory needs, and a range of other issues including diet and sleep. We also run four support groups having achieved 18 group meetings reaching 87 families.

To help parents trying to support children with pathological demand avoidance (PDA), we established a new support group to meet their specific needs.

The **transition from school to adulthood** can be difficult for children and young people on the spectrum. We know that some children and young people slip through the gaps and fail to receive the help they need. Launched in 2013, our Transition Support Service is continuing to offer free advice and support to children and young people with autism and their parents and carers to help them to make a positive and successful transition from school to adult life, further education, or employment.

"Without your advice and input I feel I would not have had the strength to fight my daughter's corner. At the time I felt overwhelmed, helpless and totally alone."

Parent

We've expanded our already extensive collection of transition information resources to include new information and advice on mental health in transition, advocacy and person-centred planning.



We published *Autism – supporting your teenager*, a book for parents and carers by autism expert, Caroline Hattersley.

It includes advice and practical suggestions for parents and contains resources, activities and exercises for parents to complete with their children. Our work in this area is being recognised internationally and we are partnered with Austria, Italy, Lithuania and Romania in an EU-funded project to share best practice and to develop a programme to support the transition of young people from education to employment.

To support more adults, we have continued to grow our **national brokerage project**, which has helped 325 people this year (47 last year) to choose and get the care and support they really want, rather than being given a limited range of options. Funded by the Department of Health, this project has engaged with 2,165 professionals (147 last year) and 1,900 family members (125 last year) through family information sharing days and community hub drop-ins.

In Aberdeen, with support from the Scottish Government, we've opened a **one-stop shop** to combine support and information under one roof and stop people feeling that they are passed from service to service without really getting what they need. This is one of eight one-stop shops, which have resulted from the Scottish Government's autism strategy.



A brokerage advisor supporting an autistic adult

Sharing experiences

We know that people on the spectrum and families gain a lot from connecting and sharing their experiences and we have been expanding our ability to act as a connector.

At local level, we supported the creation of seven new **NAS branches** from Tavistock to Edinburgh. Branches help people on the spectrum and families to support each other as well as to campaign for better local services. Our review of branches found that most value the support they receive but we need more volunteers, more information sharing and new ways to spread autism awareness.

Our **membership** continues to grow and is at its highest number ever, with over 20,000 members (compared to 19,170 at the end of March 2014). Our membership magazine, *Your Autism Magazine*, continues to help members with features about all aspects of autism. This year it included a special supplement on education in May and its first mental health supplement in November, in partnership with mental health charity, Mind.

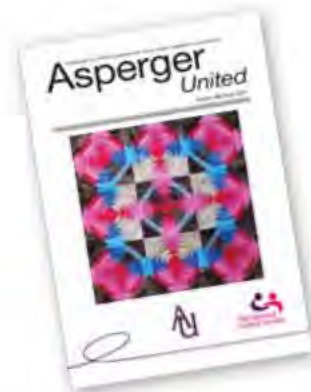
'A fantastic, well-written, high quality magazine... My copy gets passed around all my family.'

Your Autism Magazine reader, Kathryn



Your Autism Magazine

At the end of this year, we had 12,099 subscribers to *Asperger United*, our magazine run by and for autistic adults (11,176 at the end of last year).



Asperger United

'I've learned a lot from your contributors and it has helped me in encouraging my friend to seek a diagnosis – and now he has an appointment to do so! Thank you for the work you do.'

David, *Asperger United* subscriber



Our **online community** continued to offer parents of children on the spectrum and autistic adults a place to discuss their concerns and seek advice in an anonymous and safe environment. It received nearly a quarter of a million visits this year alone. Alongside this, we have grown our presence on social media, with an astonishing 210,017 Facebook fans, compared to 85,699 in the previous year. We also increased our Twitter following from 42,414 to over 71,000.

Over the last few years, with the generous support of the Inge Wakehurst trust and the Clothworkers Foundation, we have been raising awareness of the needs of **adults over the age of 40**. Our Autism and Ageing Advice service supported 400 older autistic people over the phone, an increase from 175 last year.

Our **Person to Person** service in Scotland supported a further 77 older adults (22 last year) through volunteers providing telephone, email and face-to-face support as well as organising coffee clubs for adults on the spectrum.

Similarly, our **Parent to Parent** service puts parents in touch with others who have a lot of experience supporting a child with autism and this year worked with 775 families, up from 462 last year.

Gillian McCarthy, our Person to Person co-ordinator, was our Employee of the Year.

Gillian's leadership of the **Person to Person** service and the support she's given volunteers have shown her determination to improve support for adults after diagnosis.

Outreach Worker, Alastair Warren, was runner up.

Alistair has helped those he supports by setting up a music group for writing and recording songs, supporting an individual who loves Japanese anime pottery to sell this through a market stall and helping another individual with OCD to clean and re-order his home.

"She was so kind and understanding – I did not feel judged at all. I do not feel so completely isolated and alone now. It does help so much to hear other people are in the same situation... I'd hit rock bottom but now I feel better equipped to deal with this huge mountain I need to start climbing."

Parent after a call from a Parent to Parent volunteer



Employee of the Year, Gillian McCarthy



Runner up, Alastair Warren

Providing excellent schools and adult services

Children and adults on the spectrum sometimes need the specialist support that is only possible in autism-specific schools and care services. We were the first ever organisation to open an autism-specific school in 1965 to cater for children who otherwise were at risk of exclusion from education. As those children became older, we expanded to a residential home at Somerset Court. We are aiming to make our schools and services examples of excellence in supporting people on the spectrum of all ages to fulfil their potential.

Our schools

“I would like to say how good this school is. If I was anywhere else I would not be at the level which I am now. The school has done a lot for me – not just the education but making me into the person which I am today.”

Student leaving school

In 2014-15, our eight autism-specific schools supported 492 children (compared with 449 children in 2013-14). We've worked within the free schools programme to increase the number of children we can support. **Church Lawton School**, our second free school under the NAS Academies Trust, opened this year on a temporary site in Cheshire.



Pupils at our schools

With a plan to gradually increase the intake over the next three years until reaching its capacity of 60 pupils, it is set to fill a much needed provision gap in the area. Progress has been made with our next free school, **The Vanguard School**, which is in the process of securing a site in Lambeth. **The Anderson School** in Bristol has increased its reach from seven to thirteen pupils.

Throughout the year, our School Development and Improvement Team have dedicated a lot of time to providing expertise and knowledge to support future education developments. From applications for a free school in Suffolk and an autism-specific school in Essex, to broadening our international influence by working in partnership with Beijing University and training teachers in China.

At the same time, we have maintained and improved the quality of our existing schools. **Radlett Lodge School** in Hertfordshire achieved the overall 'Ofsted Outstanding' rating for the second time and the school's Radlett Rappers performed with international music group Big Brovaz for World Autism Awareness Week. Our two schools inspected under the new Ofsted framework maintained a good status.

We have continued to embed **MyProgress®**, our unique approach to education, within our schools. **MyProgress®** involves all aspects of our education provision from our ethos to our approach to the curriculum and assessment through to the range of interventions we use in our schools.





We are not rigid in our approach, favouring one style of support for every child. Instead, we undertake personalised assessments of each pupil to ensure we use the most effective strategies for the individual. This starts with the MyAbility profile identifying the distinct way autism impacts on them and how they learn best, followed by each student's termly **MyProgress®** meeting to identify personalised strategies to help the student overcome their barriers to learning but also nurture each young person's talents, so they experience success, develop confidence and thrive. Each student has a personalised **MyProgress®** file giving evidence of their academic, social, and emotional progress. **MyProgress®** ensures that every pupil at an NAS school gets the education that is right for their particular needs.

"We are so proud of our son's achievements. We consider ourselves both fortunate and lucky to have such specialist support."

Parent of a Year 11 student

We have also expanded our range of extra services to accommodate the various needs of each person throughout the year. These extra services include residential care, outreach programmes, short breaks, social clubs and wider family support services. Our first ever school and the first autism-specific school in the world, **Sybil Elgar School** in West London, has also just opened a residential unit, so that 52-week residential placements are now available to its students.

At **Daldorch House School** in East Ayrshire, we've made great improvements to the outdoor environment, which received positive feedback at a recent Autism Accreditation review. In addition, the quality of our short breaks, residential and outreach services were commended by the Care Inspectorate. The improvements have been so outstanding that the local council have requested that we expand Daldorch's satellite school in East Kilbride.

Our schools are also helping to prepare students for life after education. At **Helen Allison School** in Kent, we've opened the innovative post-16 hub, which is proving successful in preparing students for adult life. The hub provides valuable opportunities to each student to visit local colleges and work with local employers. And the residential provision achieved an Outstanding rating from Ofsted. **Autisan Creative Enterprises**, a collaborative project between adult services and **Robert Ogden School**, won the NAS Autism Professionals Award for Inspirational Education Provision.

This was for an inclusive project producing and selling goods such as fudge, ceramics and firebricks to the public. The scheme was recognised for its huge impact on the development of local students and autistic adults.

Fujitsu have selected **Thames Valley School** as the chosen SEN school in Reading for their Education Ambassador Programme. This will see the school opening an 'innovation hub' equipped with tablets, hybrid devices and laptops to deliver a digital education to students and teachers through projects including coding, social media and cyber security.



"The staff are all wonderful and my son is the wonderful, confident person he is because of your school."

Parent of a Year 10 student



Pupils at our schools

Our adult services

“Thank you for the remarkable transformation in [our son] since his arrival at [the service] only six months ago... The last few years had a terrible impact on [him]... [but] when he walked in the room yesterday, proud, confident and looking great in his suit, it was clear that he is happy and healthy in his new surroundings. You really have found the [son] we thought we had lost.”

Parent of a person we support

We continue to build on our strengths to improve the support we provide to autistic adults through our services, above all the dedication of our staff. This dedication has led to our adult services in Wales recently achieving a bronze award for the Government's Corporate Health Standard, reflecting the efforts they have made to ensure employee wellbeing and motivation.

In 2014-15, we supported over 1,700 people through our adult social care services (1,643 during the previous year). This included more than 250 people living in residential services (compared with 243 in 2013-14), as well as over 1,000 people receiving community-based support. Through expertise and determination to provide pioneering, personalised opportunities for autistic adults, we have helped to promote the independence of the people we support and act as a beacon of best practice for other providers. Every person we support has a person-centred plan, setting out their likes, dislikes, aspirations and ambitions, developed in partnership with support staff and family.

We opened a number of new services this year. **Kingsley House**, our new residential service in North Devon, offers autistic adults the support to do what they want, when they want, in a beautiful rural setting. We've also opened two new **autism resource centres** in Swansea and Preston, as well as five adult and **Teenscene social groups** for teenagers across Northern Ireland. These groups give young people the chance to overcome social isolation, increase confidence and make friends in a safe and comfortable environment.



A Kingsley House resident

We're expanding our sensory support so that more people will be able to relax in comfortable spaces that feel right to them. We've been developing a new garden sensory pod for **Petershead**, a supported living service in Scotland. The pod will be placed in the garden and each person will be able to customise it with light and sound settings, according to their needs.

All of our services help people we support to access the local community, helping to build people's confidence and quality of life as well as helping to educate the community about autism. For example, we helped twelve people to pass their first aid certification at **Linden House**, our day service in Surrey.



Our student services at **De Montfort University** and the **University of Northampton** have supported students to make the most of their experience and studies, with 76% of graduates obtaining a 2:1 degree or higher. A comedian on the spectrum performed to almost 200 people at a comedy night in Somerset for **World Autism Awareness Week**, and people we support at **Acton day service** performed in a carol concert and served refreshments from their café.

“The staff who are dealing with [our son] are all experienced and knowledgeable in autism and are bringing the best out in him. In the past I have found it hard to find a group with the knowledge and understanding that this one has so I’m delighted it was available to us and is helping to make a difference.”

Parent of somebody we support

Many innovative projects at our services this past year mean people we support have had the opportunity to be part of a team, be given a role in a meaningful enterprise and meet local people. **Autisan Creative Enterprises** in the North of England supported people to work by setting up an enterprise studio in the Manchester resource centre to print t-shirts and mugs to be sold at various events.

Our first gallery and shop opened this summer in Leicestershire and a man has been supported by the one-stop shop in Scotland to open his own glass works company.



Autisan Creative Enterprises products

Paul Smith, the Deputy Manager of our Community Services in Hertfordshire, is our Manager of the Year.

Paul has helped make these services even more efficient and effective, designing new ways for staff to report back on activities they have supported people to do and goals that have been achieved as well as areas they want to develop. Staff have been inspired by these new systems and Paul has now introduced a new system of staff shadowing so that people can learn more skills from each other.



Manager of the Year, Paul Smith

Supporting professionals

A support worker, a GP or social worker who really understands autism can make all the difference to the lives of people on the spectrum and their families. That's why one of our priorities is to help more professionals to increase their skills and knowledge.

Training more professionals

This year, we trained 4,500 professionals on everything from basic autism awareness through to specialist topics such as sensory issues and supporting people with challenging behaviour.

This year, at least 664 professionals completed one of our **online training** modules and we've expanded our topics to include autism, sport and physical activity. All these new modules are designed, developed and delivered by autistic adults. The continuing and increased involvement of people on the autism spectrum in all our training, conferences and consultancy means everything we do is informed by the people who really understand autism.

Find out more about the training we provide at www.autism.org.uk/askautism.



Doing our online training

At our Lorna Wing Centre, we have helped to improve diagnostic practice, training more than 120 UK and international autism professionals in **better diagnostic practice**.

Our assessment and training is based on the unique Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO) framework that our founders Lorna Wing and Judith Gould developed together.

Find out more about DISCO at www.autism.org.uk/disco.

We know it's not just health and social care professionals who need a better understanding of autism. We have worked with 1,000 **employers and employability specialists** across England and Wales, making it possible for employers not only to be able to hire more autistic adults who can work, but also to get the very best from people on the spectrum who are already in work. We also published new print and digital editions of four key titles aimed at helping **teachers** to support students on the spectrum in school, including *Helping young children with autism to learn* and *My friend Sam*.

To help **criminal justice professionals**, we published a new practical guide in partnership with the Association for Chief Police Officers. People on the spectrum may be victims, witnesses, suspects or offenders and our guide will help professionals to understand how to adapt their behaviour to better communicate with and understand people on the autism spectrum.

As well as delivering direct training, we have also provided wide-ranging, bespoke consultancy to local authorities, schools and providers across the NHS, social care and criminal justice sectors. Our consultancy approach starts with identifying the problems and challenges these organisations face, whether it is implementing a new piece of legislation or understanding best practice on reasonable adjustments, and then developing bespoke solutions.

Advising on protecting children and young people on the spectrum

Children and young people with autism can struggle to communicate emotions and needs, making it difficult for professionals to identify signs of abuse and neglect. We started a consortium with Ambitious about Autism and the Autism Education Trust to improve **safeguarding outcomes** for children and young people with autism. With support from the Department for Education, we are working together to increase the quality of safeguarding services across England, leading to more early intervention to prevent the abuse and neglect of children with autism.

We published *Safeguarding children with autism*, a free book available to all professionals who work with children with autism, and distributed 6,000 copies to professionals across the country.

Celebrating the best in the field

We want the very best autism professionals to feel rewarded and recognised for their work. Our **Autism Professionals Awards**, supported by Axcis Education Recruitment were bigger and better than ever this year, with 189 entries over 13 categories.



Autism Professional Award winners with Jane Asher

The awards were announced at the our Autism Professional Conference, attended by nearly 600 people including our royal patron, Her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex, who enjoyed spending time with delegates and exhibitors. The Autism Professional Conference is one of 12 conferences we delivered across the UK with a total attendance of 2,600 delegates.

“Absolutely amazing, I have never left a conference so motivated and inspired.”

Conference delegate



Jennifer O'Toole, founder of Asperkids speaking at the Professional Conference

“Asperkids’ slogan is ‘Let’s be different. Together.’ And the Harrogate Conference pulled it off with flying colours. What a joy to be included among such brilliant minds and equally brilliant spirits. To see, in action, NAS’s ongoing dedication to respect and camaraderie. In short, the beautiful way they — we — got to be different. Together.”

Jennifer O'Toole, founder of Asperkids

Our online network for professionals, Network Autism, also generously sponsored by Axcis Education Recruitment, grew to 7,000 professionals. They use it day-to-day to develop and enhance their practice with specialist articles, daily news, discussions and groups on everything from iPad apps to diagnostic practice. You can join network autism at network.autism.org.uk.

Improving quality through accreditation

One of the ways we support professionals is through our Autism Accreditation Service, which acts as a clear standard of excellence for hundreds of organisations across the UK and the world. We now have 500 services registered, from Liverpool to Singapore. We’ve invested in the development of an online assessment and information management system, ‘Accreditation Online’, which was launched in January after two years of development and testing. The service continues to support quality improvement in schools and direct services for adults but has recently expanded into new areas where we know practice needs to improve, including the criminal justice system and the NHS.

Increasing autism expertise

Our unique relationship with families, children and adults on the autism spectrum, professionals and researchers means we have a deep understanding of autism from many different perspectives. We have committed to continuing to develop the expertise of our staff so we always stay at the cutting edge of autism knowledge. Our understanding informs the media work and campaigns we undertake to change public perceptions of autism, underpins the training we provide to professionals and families and ensures that our services and schools achieve the highest standards of autism practice.

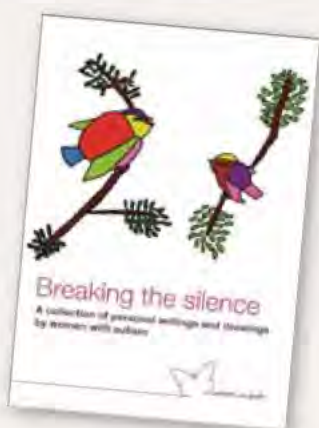
Measuring our impact

This year we have appointed a new Head of Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation and two joint Heads of Autism Knowledge and Expertise to lead and develop our autism expertise. We know we have a massive impact on lives, but have not been as good as we could have been when it comes to measuring that impact. Over the next five years, we intend to improve this so that we can better understand where and how we make a difference. We can then do more of the things that really impact on lives, understand where we need to improve, change our practice and share what we learn with other organisations.

Partnering to increase knowledge

We continue to partner with universities and other research institutions to shape and support research, develop an evidence base and increase understanding, including the Institute of Psychiatry, the University of York and City University London. Last year, we increased the work we are doing with Newcastle University, in particular supporting the **Autism spectrum, adulthood and ageing project**.

To improve knowledge of the experience of women on the spectrum, we worked with an innovative EU-funded partnership between four European autism organisations. The project, called **Autism in Pink**, concluded in June 2014 and its research findings along with a free downloadable book, *Breaking the silence*, can be found at www.autisminpink.net.



Autism in Pink's *Breaking the silence*

Changing our language

We know that there are many voices within the autism community and we try our best to reflect them. Working with Centre for Research in Autism and Education (CRAE), we conducted research to **understand the way people describe autism** in the UK today. We had over 4,000 responses, showing what an important issue this was for people on the spectrum and families. As a result of this research, we are now changing the way we talk about autism to reflect people's different preferences. We believe that it is reasonable to use different terms when communicating with different audience groups while recognising that every individual has the right to be described in the way they choose. The full research article is to be published in the *Autism journal*. You can read it at www.autism.org.uk/describingautism.



A quote from the research into describing autism

Our plans for 2016



Achieving social change

We will:

- **improve public behaviour** towards people on the spectrum by rolling out a major new volunteer-led awareness programme
- **extend our Access Award** to 75 venues and public spaces so that people on the spectrum feel welcome in many more places by the end of 2015-16
- evaluate our new **community organising approach** and help more of our supporters to press for better local autism services
- facilitate our **supporters meeting candidates** ahead of council and national elections in 2016 so that hundreds of candidates are more aware of autism before taking office, and start a new shadowing scheme for MPs
- press for more national **funding for care services** in England through our leadership role in the Care and Support Alliance
- work with the **new Government and Parliament** to make new policies and initiatives on employment, apprenticeships, welfare benefits and support for people with complex needs autism-friendly
- open five **new branches and local groups**, extending our ability to campaign and provide family support and local information across the UK.



Being a partner for life

We will:

- increase monthly **unique visits to our website** to 450,000 and pilot a live chat application to make it even quicker and easier for people to find the information they need
- begin a programme to **assess people's information needs** even more systematically so that we can proactively provide the information and advice people need at different stages in their life
- almost double the proportion of **enquiries we handle at first point of contact** via our helpline to achieve 50%
- build our **membership** from 20,500 to 22,000 members, strengthening our organisation's contact with those we exist to support
- conduct over 100 specialist **diagnostic and assessment clinics**
- support 2,200 parents in the first stages after diagnosis through our **EarlyBird** programme and 750 families through our **Parent to Parent** service and launch our new **Teen Life** family-support training package in South Yorkshire
- complete our evaluation of our **innovative brokerage project** so that we can increase the number of people empowered through individual support plans
- support 100 autistic adults to **sustain employment** in their workplaces.



Providing excellent schools and services

We will:

- open **four new centres** to support young people with autism in Surrey County Council mainstream schools – starting with Salesian School in Chertsey and Rodborough School in Milford, thanks to support from the Cullum family
- open our **new holiday facilities** to allow families to take a break in an autism-friendly environment
- welcome **40 new students** to our new Thames Valley and Church Lawton specialist autism schools, opened as part of the free schools programme, and 12 more to our established independent schools
- develop a new range of services for adults with **complex needs**
- support 295 autistic adults through **residential and supported living** services and deliver 65,000 hours of **community support**
- develop more **community projects** to allow people we support to try new things and be a part of their community.



Supporting professionals

We will:

- open up our **resources for teachers** through a new campaign, working with *Educating the East End* school Frederick Bremer
- help spread good practice among specialist autism services by expanding our **Accreditation Scheme** to 540 services internationally
- increase health, social care and education **professionals' knowledge of autism** through training 6,000, providing conferences to 2,500, and recruiting 2,500 new members to our online professional network Network Autism
- develop new products for **criminal justice services** and professionals to make sure more people on the spectrum are treated with fairness in these settings
- train 1,000 **employers and employability** professionals to help open up the opportunities for people on the spectrum who can work.



Improving autism expertise and support services

We will:

- undertake detailed **evaluations** of three of our services to learn more about what does and doesn't work
- partner with others on five **multi-site research projects** to help build up knowledge across the sector and internationally
- roll out our new **Autism Expertise Programme** and start reflective practice supervisions for our staff
- launch a new **IT strategy, telephony system and self-service HR system** to improve our efficiency
- maintain our current **voluntary turnover rate** for staff to provide continuity
- recruit 300 **new volunteers** to allow us to scale up our activities.

Improving support behind the scenes

Our support services, including HR, Finance, Property and IT, are critical in making sure we achieve our charitable objectives and deliver excellent frontline services to help people on the spectrum lead the life they choose.

Supporting our staff

This year, 3,421 staff worked at The National Autistic Society, down from 3,610 in 2013-14. We piloted a new **Autism Education Programme** for staff this year and the findings will inform a new induction framework for new staff in schools and adult services and a new reflective supervision framework for all staff. We are developing a long-term modular programme to support staff to develop a deeper understanding of autism and enhance the skills necessary to transfer understanding into practice.

We have worked hard to improve the experience of those applying for work at the charity, including providing a **new online recruitment system** and implementing a more flexible pay structure. We hope this will help us to overcome the challenges that we've faced in staff recruitment in some of our schools and services.

We've managed to **reduce sickness levels** by developing a robust approach to managing attendance at work.

We've held a programme of workshops to provide support to employees with a disability and their line managers, and want to increase the number of staff who are on the spectrum who work for us as well as those with wider disabilities.

Upgrading our information technology

We want individuals within our schools and services to have access to technology that allows them to lead more independent and autonomous lives. This includes offering safe internet access, accessible communication systems, appropriate assistive technology and investing in innovative applications and services including robotics to support learning and personal development.

We are developing a **new IT strategy** that will streamline our business processes and provide staff with improved desktop operating systems. In common with other organisations we are seeking to improve our infrastructure by hosting much of our data in the cloud. We will also be investing in a new telephony system.

A highlight of the year was being nominated for the Autism Professionals Awards for the in-house development of **Choices**, an application that helps people on the spectrum with communication difficulties to choose their preferred activities.



Using the Choices app at our Northamptonshire service

Developing our property

We've been working with specialist architects, contractors and others on the design and build monitoring of Church Lawton School, our newest free school, and the four new Cullum Centres and their partner schools. We've also been carrying out a **programme of refurbishment** in many of our schools and services. Notable projects include those at Catrine Bank, Sybil Elgar House and Longford Court.



The National
Radlett Lodge School



Fundraising

In order to meet the ambitions set out in our strategy, we will need to deliver sustainable growth in our voluntary income. This means that whilst grants and other forms of income restricted to specific activities will continue to be an immensely important part of our funding mix, we will also continue to invest in those income streams which are likely to deliver less volatile and largely unrestricted income in the future; namely individual giving and supporter fundraising.

This will enable us to plan with greater confidence and direct funds towards activities which we know have greatest impact for people on the autism spectrum and their families. It will also enable us to meet the cost of essential behind-the-scenes support services which are often harder to fund.

Our investment in **attracting new donors** to the NAS continues and the number giving regularly via direct debit has grown to around 10,000. In the year ahead, we also plan to invest in growing the number of participants across our portfolio of challenge events.

Finance

Our Finance team continues to work closely with all the areas of the charity providing financial support, information and advice to new, existing and developing services. We've supported the Fundraising team in securing our voluntary income as well as our schools and services in tendering for new and existing business. In the coming year we will continue to roll out our new financial reporting system to further automate the provision of financial information.

The Fee Collection Team is our Team of the Year.

They support the organisation by making sure that fees are paid on time and keep our cashflow healthy. But they do much more than that, by acting as a third party in negotiations between local authorities and people we support. Sometimes people can find these conversations difficult especially when they involve long and complex phone calls.

The team steps in daily to reassure people we support about their care and resolves issues with commissioners. This year they have also provided a number of work experience placements for people with Asperger syndrome.

Running complex projects

We established a Project Management Office this year to provide advice and guidance on project management best practice within the charity to help us to deliver our mission. The PMO keeps oversight of all corporate projects and keeps the Strategic Management Group aware of progress and alert to any issues or risks. This year, the PMO has supported us to deliver complex and multi-partner projects such as our new free schools, the EU-funded Autism in Pink project and the tender for a new telephony system.

Data Security

As part of our commitment to enhanced Data Security and Data Protection the NAS has worked to achieve **NHS N3 Accreditation**, and set up an IT Governance Committee to overview Data Protection and ensure that the issue has high visibility amongst staff and the Executive.

Procurement

We have continued to use our procurement function to improve value for money in all we procure. In particular we have reduced further through supplier management the costs of central contracts.

A big thank you to....

We would like to sincerely thank all those charitable trusts and foundations, companies, branches and individuals who have helped us with their commitment and generosity during the year, without which we would not be able to provide crucial support, information and advice to many thousands of individuals and families living with autism.

Our key donors included:

ASPone Ltd
Axcis Education Recruitment
Bank Workers Charity
Bic UK Ltd
Brian Wilson Charitable Trust
CardMix
Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust
City Bridge Trust
Clarks Shoes
Classic FM Foundation
Disney Theatrical Group
Helms Briscoe
Inge Wakehurst Trust
MoneySuperMarket
Peter Harrison Foundation
PF Charitable Trust
Sheaffer Pen
Synthomer plc
The Hugh Fraser Foundation
The John Ellerman Foundation
The Liz and Terry Bramall Charitable Trust
The N Sethia Foundation
The Pilkington Charitable Trust
The Sylvia Adams Trust
The Tay Charitable Trust
The Three Guineas Trust
Trafigura Foundation
United Grand Lodge of England

We would also like to thank the following organisations for their generous support by way of gifts in kind or direct support to our beneficiaries:

- Clifford Chance LLP, Richard Drabble QC and David Blundell for their pro bono support for our legal campaigning work
- Steve Broach for legal advice on our policy work
- Clifford Chance LLP, Harper MacLeod LLP and Exchange Chambers for the continuing pro bono support given to parents in support of our Education Rights Service
- Browne Jacobson LLP and King Wood Malleson LLP for their pro bono support of our Welfare Rights and Community Care advice services
- Clifford Chance LLP for their pro bono support in developing the Cullum Centres in the Surrey area
- HiT Entertainment for continuing to support us by granting a licence to use Thomas & Friends™ on our merchandise.

There were also a number of individual donors, who have made significant gifts towards our work but have chosen to remain anonymous. We would like to thank them for their support.

We received a number of grants from statutory bodies including:

BBC Children in Need (Northern Ireland)	£9,916 from BBC Children in Need Northern Ireland for 'NAS Juniors'
BBC Children in Need (Wales)	£5,138 from BBC Children in Need Wales for 'Spectrum Out of School Club'
Big Lottery Fund (21st Century Life)	£87,096 from the Big Lottery Fund (21st Century Life) to the Daldorch Family Programme, which helps equip hundreds of families across Scotland with the resilience to cope with the challenges of autism
Big Lottery Fund (Life Transitions)	£37,990 from the Big Lottery Fund (Life Transitions) for 'Moving Forward', a three-year project in which our Prospects employment service provides an individualised package of support to up to 200 people a year in Scotland
Big Lottery Fund (People & Places)	£18,614 from the Big Lottery Fund (People & Places) to expand our network of branches from 13 to 17 and enhance the support offered by the existing branches
Department for Education	£101,349 from the Department for Education to improve safeguarding outcomes for children and young people with autism
Department for Education	£212,220 from the Department for Education to develop and reform services that support children with SEN, disabilities and other health needs
Department for Education	£750,000 from the Department for Education towards the Autism Education Trust (AET). The NAS manages the AET on behalf of a coalition of autism partners.
Department of Health	£151,000 from the Autism Innovation Fund for two projects: 'Helptech' providing technology for students with autism; and a new 'Somerset Autism Respite Service'.
Department of Health	£186,195 from the Department of Health towards the National Brokerage project
Department of Health	£33,750 from the Department of Health (Health and Care Voluntary Sector Strategic Partner Programme)
Scottish Government – Autism Development Fund	£10,000 from the Scottish Government towards for Forest School Days to support groups in a woodland setting using Forest School methodology
Scottish Government – Autism Development Fund	£11,000 from the Scottish Government towards a short breaks programme service in the rural East Ayrshire site with the purchase of two Mongolian yurts

We received a number of grants from statutory bodies including:

<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£2,500 from the Scottish Government towards to support a fishing club for individuals on the autism spectrum, helping to promote links with the rural community and educate nearby residents and other visitors about autism</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£3,600 from the Scottish Government towards the expansion of the NasCafe to four locations in Scotland</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£3,950 from the Scottish Government towards an allotment area and gardening opportunities for people with autism, promoting the therapeutic benefit of growing their own produce and being active</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£49,882.85 from the Scottish Government towards the development of Prospects' graduate employment programme</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£6,500 from the Scottish Government towards a conference in Kilmarnock to raise awareness of autism in Ayrshire and beyond</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£6,600 from the Scottish Government towards a conference in Aberdeen City Centre for professionals and families keen to understand more about autism and what coping strategies are available</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£66,304 from the Scottish Government towards supporting people with autism through transitions in Aberdeenshire</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£8,000 from the Scottish Government towards the Daldorch Family Programme to support parents and children to cope with the realities of autism</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Autism Development Fund</p>	<p>£9,465.50 from the Scottish Government towards a Transitions Handbook to equip people on the autism spectrum with the tools they need to manage the transition from school to adulthood</p>
<p>Scottish Government - Third Sector Early Intervention Fund</p>	<p>£22,184 from the Scottish Government through the Third Sector Early Intervention Fund, managed on behalf of Scottish Government by the Big Lottery Fund in Scotland.</p>
<p>Welsh Government</p>	<p>£51,300 from the Welsh Government for NAS Cymru's core work to support people with autism in Wales</p>
<p>Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust</p>	<p>£79,289.01 from Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust for refurbishment work at the Corfton Road campus in Sybil Elgar School</p>



Part 2: Financial review

Overview

The NAS Group overall results were positive with net incoming resources of £3m (a decrease from £4.2m last year due to lower capital grant income from the Education Funding Agency for the NAS Academies Trust) and general funds increasing to £7.3m (£6.3m last year). These results ensure that, as a group we continue to be able to provide much needed support to our beneficiaries.

Financial highlights

NAS Group

- Total income was £95.7m, a reduction of 2.6% on last year with total expenditure reducing by 1.4% to £92.7m. Income has reduced due to a slight drop in voluntary income for project-based work, a lower requirement for grant income from the Education Funding Agency within NAS AT and the Broomhayes School site re-opening as an adult service with fewer individuals being supported.
- Fee income, mainly from statutory bodies for delivery of services, remained at 83% of our total income. Pressure from local authorities seeking to reduce costs poses a major ongoing challenge for us, as it does for the sector as a whole.
- Unrestricted voluntary income remained relatively static at £4.4m (£4.3m in 2013/14). Restricted voluntary income for project work dropped by £0.8m as historic grants came to an end.
- Overall, income from donations and gifts rose slightly to £5.0m (2013/14: £4.9m), whilst income from grants (excluding NAS Academies Trust) fell to £2.7m (2013/14: £3.6m) and legacy income fell slightly to £0.2m (2013/14: £0.3m).
- Income from activities rose to £0.4m (2013/14: £0.28m) due to increased sponsorship, Christmas card and merchandise revenues.
- Cash increased in the year by £1.9m to 13.6m.
- Expenditure on charitable activities reduced in the year by £1.5m to £89.4m. This reduction reflects the drop in income with the closure of Broomhayes School and the reduction in project-based work delivered over the year.
- We continued our investment to attract new donors to the charity, and as a result fundraising costs rose to £3.0m (2013/14: £2.8m).
- Delivery of services and our other activities demand skilled staff with staffing costs representing 71% of our total expenditure, the same percentage as last year.
- £4.3m (2013/14 £5.8m) was spent on fixed assets including £3.3m on the building of the Church Lawton School (Cheshire) and completion of Thames Valley School.
- Designated funds (excluding tangible fixed assets and pension reserve) have decreased from £2.6m to £2.4m as projects are completed.
- The FRS17 pension liability has increased from £13.5m to £16.7m.



NAS Services Ltd

NAS Services Ltd is the trading arm of the NAS through which it delivers the majority of its contracted support via its schools and services.

It is funded through fee income received from providing statutory services to individual people with autism.

- Income reduced by 2.1% to £78.8m due to the closure of Broomhayes School and the re-designation of the site to an adult service with a resulting drop in the number of people supported at the service.
- £71.1m was spent supporting children and adults on the autism spectrum in our schools and services. This was a reduction of £2.3% on last year which reflects the change in service provision at Broomhayes as well as tight cost control across all areas.

Autism UK Ltd

Autism UK Ltd is the subsidiary through which we trade Christmas cards, publications and sponsorship of conferences and events.

- Turnover has increased by £76k to £353k due to additional card and merchandise income plus additional sponsorship income from conferences run in the year.
- Costs have reduced by £80k as a result of lower printing, warehousing and associated sponsorship costs.



A selection of our christmas cards

NAS Academies Trust

The NAS Academies Trust was set up to deliver the free school element of the NAS' overall education strategy. In addition to Thames Valley school in Reading which opened in September 2013 the Trust opened Church Lawton school in Cheshire in January this year in temporary accommodation, moving into its permanent site in April 2015.


The Trust is funded mainly by the Education Funding Agency and local authorities who support the pupils on roll at each school.

- Grant income received from the EFA reduced from £4.3m to £3.9m due to reduced capital works.
- Expenditure increased from £0.6m to £1.3m as pupil numbers increased at Thames Valley school from 18 to 38 over the year and Church Lawton had 4 new students in their temporary accommodation from January.

Risk management

The Board of Trustees fully recognises its responsibility for the management of risk and a standing committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, is charged with identifying, assessing and minimising the major risks (based on likelihood of occurrence and potential impact) to which the charity is exposed. This committee involves Trustees, the Chief Executive, and other senior managers, including the Internal Auditor.

During the year, the committee has continued to maintain a close overview of management's implementation of departmental and inter-departmental action plans to mitigate the risks considered to have high levels of both likelihood and impact.



The Board of Trustees as a body has undertaken an annual review of the risk register and is able to confirm that the major risks to which the charity is exposed continue to be properly identified, reviewed and evaluated, and that appropriate systems continue to be established and maintained in order to manage those risks.

The Society has identified the following major risks.

- Financial: maintain income. The Board has adopted a five-year business plan for the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 and the approved budget for the 2015/16 financial year has been prepared in line with the business plan assumptions.
- Operational: ensure the provision of high levels of safeguarding for the vulnerable young people and adults we work with. Our Services Quality and Development Committee, in conjunction with the main Board, will continue to review and verify safe practice.
- Operational: ensure the ability to change the way we deliver services to respond to changing need. We have restructured our operational activities accordingly.

The Society has in place a well-established system of internal controls that govern its operations. These controls have been designed to provide a reasonable assurance against risk. The internal audit function evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of controls across our activities.

Reserves policy

Trustees review reserve levels as part of their review of the monthly management accounts, as well as reviewing them annually as part of the strategic planning process. With general funds (risk reserve) at £7.3m the charity has met the minimum risk reserve requirement set out in its Reserves Policy.

The general reserves figure of £7.3m is regarded as being the Charity's free level of reserves. In calculating the balance, the figure does not include any fixed assets or designated funds held by the NAS. As explained further below, the balance also does not include the Charity's FRS 17 pension liability, on the grounds that the liability, which is assessed annually by the actuary, is not in total immediately repayable with plans for meeting the deficit set over a long period of time, for which a deficit plan is in operation.

In determining the requirement for a risk reserve target of £7.0m the Trustees considered the following:

- the impact of significantly reduced income across schools and services requiring a commercial business review of operations and/or change to service provision
- the impact on the charity's ability to deliver charitable activities or reduced income from fundraising activities
- the impact of changing business needs on our property portfolio requiring significant property investment or divestment.

The Trustees have also included within the charity's designated reserves a local authority pension scheme reserve of £1.0m. Note 15 to the accounts details the amount of the fund and Note 21 provides additional information.

The Trustees consider that the previously agreed targets remain appropriate and realistic and take the view that the level of risk reserve held is acceptable given the current economic climate. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As shown in the accounts, our cash position clearly demonstrates that we are able to fund our revenue expenditure including the yearly pension contributions. We believe that there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue and the accounts have therefore been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

Pensions and FRS17

When reviewing the charity's risks and appropriate levels of reserve required the Trustees also take into consideration the impact of its FRS17 pension liability.

Each year we include in our accounts the actuarial valuation of our three Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS). This year, our liability has increased by £3.2m to £16.7m. This contrasts with a decrease last year of £2.9m and an increase of £3m in 2012/13. These changes demonstrate the volatility of this liability which is largely due to the changing conditions in the financial markets and inflation assumptions, which are outside of our control.

Note 21 to the accounts details the impact of the FRS17 adjustments to the NAS financial position.

The table below shows the impact on our reserves.

Investment policy

Investment return and adequacy against policy

In order that the Society has cash readily available to meet working capital and other needs, the Trustees continue to adopt a cautious policy to maintain diversified cash deposits rather than to invest in stocks and shares, property or any other investment product. In 2010/11 it was decided that the Society would deposit up to £4m at any one time in one-year bonds with banks rated AA or better.

This policy was reviewed during the year 2012/13 and the Trustees agreed that, in addition to the £4m one-year fixed rate bonds, funds could also be deposited in notice accounts, short-term deposit accounts or three- or six-month bonds with a £5m maximum investment in any one institution rated A1 or better.

The new policy also allows the Society to review medium and longer term investment opportunities and has remained in place during 2014/15.

With interest rates at consistently low levels throughout the year and taking into account the cautious approach adopted by the Trustees the investment return generated during the year is in line with expectations. The charity continues to work to maximise the returns it generates from its investments.

As at 31 March 2015 the Society had £3m invested in a one-year fixed rate bonds, £5m invested in three and six month bonds, plus a further £3.5m in global treasury funds and a corporate deposit account.

Summary of the effect of changes in the pension funds on reserves

	2015 £m	2014 £m	2013 £m	2012 £m
Restricted reserves excluding NAS Academies Trust	3.9	4.3	4.4	5.0
Restricted Funds NAS-Academies Trust	7.7	4.4	0.1	-
Unrestricted reserves before pension funds deficit	35.5	35.5	35.4	33.7
FRS17 opening deficit on pension funds	(13.5)	(16.4)	(13.2)	(11.1)
Change in FRS17 pensions deficit in year	(3.3)	2.8	(3.2)	(2.1)
Reported total reserves (page 47)	30.3	30.6	23.5	25.5



Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors of The National Autistic Society for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

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 charitable company and the group and of the incoming and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group 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 in the Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP)
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent

- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company and the group will continue to operate.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's and the group's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and the group and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the *Companies Act 2006*, the *Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008*, the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006* (as amended) and the provisions of the charitable company's constitution.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The following statements have been affirmed by each of the Trustees of the charitable company.

- So far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information (that is, information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware.
- Each Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

This Directors' report, prepared under the *Charities Act 2011*, the *Companies Act 2006* the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005*, was approved by the board of Trustees of The National Autistic Society on 21 July 2015, including in their capacity as company Directors approving the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:

Dr Carol Homden CBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees.



Independent auditor's report

to the members and Trustees of
The National Autistic Society

We have audited the financial statements of The National Autistic Society for the year ended 31 March 2015 set out on pages 46-74.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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* and to the charitable company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 44(1c) of the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005*. 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 the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Trustees (who are also the Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1c) of the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and under the *Companies Act 2006* and report in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error.

This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Trustees and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Strategic Report and Trustees' Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2015 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 Practice
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Companies Act 2006*, the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and Regulation 8 of the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Registration 2006*.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the *Companies Act 2006*

In our opinion the information given in the Strategic Report and the Trustees' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the *Companies Act 2006* or the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006* (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate 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.

Tina Allison
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of
Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP
Statutory Auditor
London

Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the *Companies Act 2006*.



Last year at The National

GAVE **MILLIONS** OF PEOPLE AUTISM INFORMATION THEY COULD TRUST



16,000 

helpline enquiries answered

4.4
MILLION

website visitors

2,150

families trained post-diagnosis through EarlyBird

“The reason I feel better is that I don’t feel so alone anymore. This is the first time I have felt real support from an organisation.”

Autistic adult supported by one of our Person to Person volunteers

FIND OUT MORE AT
www.autism.org.uk

SUPPORTED OVER **2,000** PEOPLE THROUGH OUR SCHOOLS AND SERVICES



1,700

adults supported in social care services

492

children educated at our schools

New free school at **Thames Valley** and partnership with **Fujitsu**

“You have found the son we thought we had lost”

Mother of a man we support

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR SCHOOLS AND SERVICES AT
www.autism.org.uk/our-services



Thanks to our staff, volunteers, funders,
Find out more about how to take part in our

Autistic Society we...

MADE THE WORLD MORE
AUTISM-FRIENDLY



Millions £

of pounds worth of autism services protected through local campaigning

Queens Park Rangers, Macclesfield General Hospital and Newcastle Theatre Royal

joined our Access Award scheme



Worked with Government in England on a **New Autism Strategy**



"For a few hours our children were free to be themselves"

Mother after an autism-friendly performance we supported

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR WORK TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL CHANGE
www.autism.org.uk/campaign

HELPED **THOUSANDS** OF PROFESSIONALS UNDERSTAND AUTISM BETTER



4,500

professionals trained

120

professionals trained in better diagnostic practice

500

autism services accredited

7,000

professionals part of Network Autism

1,000 employers and employability specialists supported to understand autism better

FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AT
www.autism.org.uk/professionals

fundraisers, donors and campaigners.
work at www.autism.org.uk/getinvolved.

Accounts

Consolidated statement of financial activities

(incorporating income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2015

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	2	4,391	3,632	3,948	11,971	13,489
Activities for generating funds	3	361	-	-	361	284
Investment income		127	1	-	128	108
		4,879	3,633	3,948	12,460	13,881
Incoming resources from charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		24,982	8	697	25,687	27,649
Social and independent living support		53,878	14	-	53,892	52,883
Autism Expertise		307	3	-	310	299
Social Change & National Voice		20	30	-	50	11
Partner for Life		100	2	-	102	-
Supporting Professionals		3,218	-	-	3,218	3,540
		82,505	57	697	83,259	84,382
Other incoming resources						
		34	-	2	36	54
Total incoming resources		87,418	3,690	4,647	95,755	98,317
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds						
Voluntary income		2,956	-	-	2,956	2,756
Activities for generating funds	3	104	-	-	104	116
		3,060	-	-	3,060	2,872
Charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		23,852	384	1,295	25,531	27,896
Social and independent living support		49,902	840	-	50,742	49,798
Autism Expertise		2,476	516	-	2,992	3,336
Social Change and National Voice		1,755	566	-	2,321	2,313
Partner for Life		2,212	836	-	3,048	3,442
Supporting Professionals		3,841	956	-	4,797	4,164
		84,038	4,099	1,295	89,431	90,949

Year ended 31 March 2015

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Governance	4	239	-	21	260	255
Total resources expended	5	87,336	4,099	1,316	92,751	94,075
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources before transfers	6	82	(409)	3,331	3,004	4,242
Gross transfers between funds	14-15	-	-	-	-	-
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses	6	82	(409)	3,331	3,004	4,242
Other recognised gains and losses						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	21	(3,300)	-	(64)	(3,364)	2,937
Net movement in funds		(3,218)	(409)	3,267	(360)	7,179
Reconciliation of funds						
Funds brought forward	14-15	21,982	4,270	4,392	30,644	23,465
Fund balances carried forward	14-15	18,764	3,861	7,659	30,284	30,644

The above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above. The surplus for the year, for *Companies Act* purposes, comprises the net incoming resources of £3.0m (2014: £4.2m).

The notes on pages 50-74 form part of these financial statements.

Balance sheets as at 31 March 2015

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7	27,209	28,131	27,209	28,131
Tangible assets - NAS AT	7	7,261	4,031	-	-
Investments in subsidiaries	8	-	-	-	-
		34,470	32,162	27,209	28,131
Current assets					
Stocks		131	139	131	139
Debtors	10	8,686	21,321	8,880	12,545
Cash deposits		11,504	9,979	11,504	9,979
Cash at bank and in hand		1,170	1,190	1,136	1,149
Cash at bank and in hand - NAS AT		963	541	-	-
		22,454	33,170	21,651	23,812
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	6,515	18,654	6,278	9,753
Provision for pension liability	21	1,077	-	1,077	-
Net current assets		14,862	14,516	14,296	14,059
Total assets less current liabilities		49,332	46,678	41,505	42,190
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	12-13	2,151	2,450	2,151	2,450
Net assets excluding pension liabilities		47,181	44,228	39,354	39,740
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS	21	(16,729)	(13,489)	(16,729)	(13,489)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS AT	21	(168)	(95)	-	-
Net assets including pension liabilities		30,284	30,644	22,625	26,251
Funds					
Restricted funds	14	3,861	4,270	3,861	4,270
NAS Academies Trust	14				
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds		7,262	4,031	-	-
Restricted Funds		565	456	-	-
Pension reserve - NAS AT		(168)	(95)	-	-
		7,659	4,392	-	-
Unrestricted funds:	15				
Designated funds - fixed assets		26,044	26,866	26,044	26,866
Designated funds - other		2,454	2,638	2,454	2,638
General fund		7,314	6,286	7,314	6,286
Revaluation reserve		(319)	(319)	(319)	(319)
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liabilities		35,493	35,471	35,493	35,471
Pension reserve	15	(16,729)	(13,489)	(16,729)	(13,489)
Unrestricted funds including pension liabilities		18,764	21,982	18,764	21,982
Total funds	16	30,284	30,644	22,625	26,251

The notes on pages 50-74 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 21 July 2015 and signed on their behalf.

Dr Carol Homden CBE, Chair of Trustees

Consolidated cashflow statement

Year ended 31 March 2015	Notes	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities	1	6,398	5,019
Returns on investments and servicing of finance	2	151	51
Capital expenditure and financial investment	3	(4,322)	(5,792)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) before use of liquid resources		2,227	(722)
Management of liquid resources and financing	4	(300)	(282)
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		1,927	(1,004)
Net cash resources at 1 April		11,710	12,714
Net cash resources at 31 March		13,637	11,710
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		1,927	(1,004)
		2015	2014
		£'000	£'000
1. Reconciliation of net incoming resources to net cash inflow from operating activities			
Net incoming resources		3,005	4,239
Interest receivable		(128)	(108)
Depreciation		1,891	1,556
Loss on sale of tangible fixed assets		123	49
Decrease/(Increase) in stock		8	(59)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors (excl interest receivable)		12,614	(5,470)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors		(11,064)	4,653
(Decrease)/Increase in pension liability		(51)	159
Net cash inflow from operating activities		6,398	5,019
		2015	2014
		£'000	£'000
2. Returns on investments and servicing of finance			
Opening debtor balance		(10)	(67)
Interest income on cash deposits		128	108
Closing debtor		33	10
Net cash inflow from returns on investments and servicing of finance		151	51
		2015	2014
		£'000	£'000
3. Capital expenditure and financial investment			
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		(4,322)	(5,792)
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Net cash (outflow) from capital transactions		(4,322)	(5,792)
		2015	2014
		£'000	£'000
4. Management of liquid resources and financing			
New loans		-	18
Repayment of interest free loan		(2)	(3)
Repayment of City Road purchase loan		(298)	(298)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from management of liquid resources and financing		(300)	(282)

Notes forming part of the financial statements

1. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in March 2005, the *Charities Act 2011*, the Academies Accounts Direction issued by the EFA, the *Companies Act 2006* and applicable accounting standards. They have been prepared on a going concern basis as set out in the 'Reserves policy' section of the Annual Report on page 37. The particular accounting policies adopted by the Trustees are described below.

Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention.

Basis of consolidation

The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and balance sheet consolidate the financial statements of the charity and its subsidiary undertakings. The results of the subsidiaries are consolidated on a line by line basis. In February 2012, a new subsidiary, NAS Academies Trust was formed. See Note 9 for further details.

No separate SOFA has been presented for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the *Companies Act 2006* and Paragraph 397 of the SORP.

Incoming resources

All income is accounted for on an accruals basis. It is recognised in the SOFA when the conditions for receipt have been met, there is reasonable assurance of receipt and the value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

The following accounting policies are applied to specific income streams:

Donations

Voluntary contributions

Donations and all other receipts from fundraising are reported gross and the related fundraising costs are reported in costs of generating funds.

Legacies

Legacies are accounted for when it is reasonably certain that they will be received, the value can be measured with sufficient reliability and any conditions associated with payment have been fulfilled.

Gifts in kind

Gifts in kind are recognised as incoming resources based on a reasonable estimate of the gross value to the charity. This is usually an estimate of the price that would have to be paid on the open market for an equivalent item. An equivalent amount is included as expenditure under the appropriate heading in the SOFA.

Grants receivable

Grants receivable for revenue expenditure

Grants are recognised in the SOFA when the conditions for receipt have been met. Where a grant is performance related, ie linked to specific volumes of output, the grant income will be recognised to the extent that the service has been provided.

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the year for which is receivable and any unspent amount is reflected as a balance of the NAS AT restricted fund.

Grants without preconditions are recognised immediately in the SOFA.

Grants receivable for capital expenditure

Grants in respect of capital expenditure are recognised in the SOFA when receivable and not deferred. Once the capital asset is acquired, the asset is then used in line with the funder's requirements. Where the restriction remains, the asset is allocated to a restricted fund and shown as restricted capital reserves. The reserves are then reduced each year by the amount of the annual depreciation charge to the asset.

Contract income

Income from the provision of services under contract is recognised in the SOFA to the extent that the services have been provided. Where such income is invoiced or received in advance it is included in creditors as fees invoiced in advance and deferred income.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. This includes pension contributions, depreciation and deficits on disposals, direct costs of the charitable activities together with support costs that enable these activities to be undertaken. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on an apportionment basis.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Costs of generating funds

The costs of generating funds include the costs incurred by the fundraising team in generating voluntary income (donations, gifts, legacies and grants), costs incurred in connection with the purchase of Christmas cards for resale and the securing of sponsorship and investment management fees.

Charitable activities

The costs of charitable activities comprise all the resources applied by the charity in undertaking its work to meet its charitable objects as set out in the Trustees' Report.

Grants payable

In some limited circumstances, grant funding is provided to third parties to undertake work that contributes to the charity's objectives. In such cases, the total cost of the activity includes both costs incurred directly by the charity and funding provided to third parties through grant-making activities. Grants payable are recognised when a constructive or legal obligation arises.

Governance

Governance costs represent expenditure incurred in compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Fund accounting

The charity maintains various types of funds as follows:

Restricted funds

These are funds which are to be used in furtherance of the objects of the charity but in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes.

Unrestricted funds

These are funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Designated funds

These are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for specific purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements along with estimated timescales as to when the funds will be spent. Where a fund is created for a capital expenditure project, transfers are made out of this fund to the fixed asset designated fund when a fixed asset is purchased.

Transfers between funds

Transfers between restricted and unrestricted funds are disclosed separately on the SOFA. Transfers between general unrestricted funds and designated funds are disclosed in the notes to the accounts. Transfers arise from a number of circumstances, but most commonly:

- to transfer assets to and from the fixed asset designated fund
- to transfer assets between other designated funds and the general fund
- to transfer the value of fixed assets from restricted to unrestricted funds when the asset has been purchased from a restricted fund donation but the asset is held for a general and not a restricted purpose
- to transfer assets from unrestricted income funds to clear a deficit on a restricted fund.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation to date, which is provided in equal instalments over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

The financial threshold for capitalising an asset is £5,000.

No depreciation is charged on freehold land. The rates of depreciation applied to other assets are:

freehold properties	- 2%
leasehold properties	- over the terms of the leases
major refurbishment	- 20%
motor vehicles	- 25%
fixtures and office equipment	- 33%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

The condition and carrying value and, where appropriate, service potential, of the freehold and short term leasehold properties are evaluated for impairment on a regular basis. Where the carrying value of an asset is considered to be impaired, the difference between the existing carrying value and the written down value is taken to reserves.

Stocks

Stocks comprise publications, DVDs, CD-ROMs and other general merchandise and are stated at the lower end of cost and net realisable value.

Capital commitments

Material commitments of a capital nature are recognised at the end of the year in the notes to the accounts. These are major contracts entered into by the charity on which liabilities are due in future years.

Branches

The charity carries out some activities through a national network of branches. As part of the charity they use the same charity number, raise funds for both national and local activities and receive central support through advice and publicity materials. All branch transactions are accounted for gross in the accounts of the charity and all assets and liabilities, including cash retained in separate bank accounts are included in the charity's balance sheet.

Irrecoverable VAT

A significant amount of VAT is irrecoverable because the group has a mixture of activities which are zero and standard rated, exempt and outside the scope of VAT. The irrecoverable VAT is either allocated or apportioned to the relevant costs in the SOFA or included in fixed assets on the balance sheet.

Pension contributions

The charity operates both defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes.

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charge to the SOFA is the contribution payable to the pension scheme in the relevant accounting period.

Defined benefit pension schemes

The costs of providing these benefits are assessed by a qualified actuary on a periodic basis and charged over the expected remaining service life of the current employees with the charity. Within the SOFA, the current and past service costs are recognised as part of the operational costs, interest costs and expected returns on assets are shown as part of finance income, and actuarial gains and losses are disclosed on the face of the SOFA.

Teachers' pension scheme

The National Autistic Society contributes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (the TPS) at rates set by the TPS actuary and advised to Council by the TPS administrator. It is a multi-employer pension scheme and it is not possible to identify the assets and liabilities of the TPS which are attributable to the Charity. In accordance with FRS17 (Retirement Benefits) the TPS is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme.

Related parties

In accordance with the provisions of FRS8, the charity discloses in the notes to the accounts material transactions with related parties. See Note 20 for further details.

Advantage has been taken of the exemption contained in FRS8 in respect of group transactions as all subsidiaries are wholly owned or controlled and are included in publicly available consolidated accounts.

Operating leases

The annual rental for operating leases is charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the lease term.

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2015	2015	2015	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Donations and gifts	4,024	960	-	4,984	4,924
Legacies	217	6	-	223	279
Grants - Revenue	150	2,666	639	3,455	4,204
Grants - Capital	-	-	3,309	3,309	4,082
Total	4,391	3,632	3,948	11,971	13,489

As per our policy, all notified legacies were considered in respect of whether they should be accrued in the current year end. We considered the accuracy of predicting the amount and timing of receipt and as such none were brought into income.

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2015	2015	2015	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming resources					
Sponsorships	181	-	-	181	143
Christmas cards	146	-	-	146	132
Rental income	-	-	-	-	4
Other	34	-	-	34	5
Total	361	-	-	361	284
Resources expended					
Christmas cards	104	-	-	104	116
Total	104	-	-	104	116

4. Governance

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2015	2015	2015	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Company Secretary and Senior Management	54	-	-	54	63
Internal audit	85	-	-	85	79
Meeting expenses	48	-	-	48	50
External audit	46	-	18	64	50
Trustees' expenses	6	-	3	9	12
Total	239	-	21	260	255

5. Analysis of total resources expended

	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total Costs	Total Costs
	2015	2015	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Costs of generating funds	2,752	308	3,060	2,872
Charitable expenditure				
Striving for Excellence:				
Education	22,411	1,825	24,236	27,317
Social and independent living support	47,261	3,480	50,741	49,798
Autism Expertise	2,744	248	2,992	3,336
Social Change & National Voice	2,070	251	2,321	2,313
Partner for Life	2,788	260	3,048	3,442
Supporting Professionals	4,587	211	4,798	4,164
Governance	232	7	239	249
NAS Academies Trust				
Educational Operations	1,180	115	1,295	579
Governance	21	-	21	6
Total resources expended	86,046	6,705	92,751	94,075

Support costs are made up of:	Costs of generating funds	Education	Social and independent living support	Autism Expertise	Social Change and National Voice	Partner for Life	Supporting Professionals	Governance	NASAT	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Human resources	10	159	396	10	9	10	10	1	3	608
Information technology	226	621	919	212	206	210	136	6	3	2,539
Finance and business services	48	693	1,436	17	24	26	43	-	79	2,366
Chief executive and quality assurance	9	130	268	3	5	5	8	-	29	457
Marketing and customer relations management	11	161	334	4	6	6	10	-	1	533
Chief Operating Officer	4	61	127	2	2	2	4	-	-	202
Total	308	1,825	3,480	248	251	259	211	7	115	6,705

Basis of allocation – Support costs are allocated as follows: human resources and payroll is allocated on head count; offices services is allocated on desks; information technology is partly allocated on PC/laptops and partly on direct usage; all other support costs are allocated as a percentage of expenditure.

6. Net incoming/(outgoing) resources

	Group		Charity	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources				
Auditor's remuneration:				
Statutory audits – current year	63	54	42	41
Other services:				
Taxation and Advisory	28	9	27	9
Responsible Officer – NAS AT	-	2	-	-
Depreciation:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,891	1,556	1,891	1,556
Profit/loss on disposal of fixed assets:				
Loss on disposal	123	49	123	49
Operating lease rentals:				
Rent payable on properties	2,239	2,614	2,239	2,614
Hire of equipment	149	159	149	159
Hire of vehicles	730	823	730	823

7. Tangible fixed assets applied for charity use – Group and Entity

	Freehold properties	Short leasehold properties	Major refurbishment	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and office equipment	Assets under construction	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost							
As at 1 April 2014	31,665	5,840	1,376	209	4,482	89	43,661
Additions	12	76	291	25	371	3,547	4,322
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(127)	(53)	-	-	(10)	-	(190)
Transfers for year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2015	31,550	5,863	1,667	234	4,843	3,636	47,793
Accumulated depreciation							
As at 1 April 2014	5,117	2,496	323	203	3,360	-	11,499
Charge for year	582	338	291	5	675	-	1,891
Released on disposals	(30)	(28)	-	-	(9)	-	(67)
Transfers for year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2015	5,669	2,806	614	208	4,026	-	13,323
Net book value							
As at 1 April 2014	26,548	3,344	1,053	6	1,122	89	32,162
As at 31 March 2015	25,881	3,057	1,053	26	817	3,636	34,470
Included in above							
NBV of NAS AT assets							
As at 1 April 2014	3,857	-	-	6	79	89	4,031
Additions in the year	-	-	16	-	16	3,303	3,335
Depreciation charged in the year	(66)	-	(2)	(1)	(36)	-	(105)
As at 31 March 2015	3,791	-	14	5	59	3,392	7,261

Freehold properties include land at cost of **£2,983,791** (2014: £2,983,791).

A revaluation of the Hayes Hospital freehold property was carried out by Nick Millard MRICS FAAV of Bruton Knowles property consultants on 12 April 2010. The market value of the freehold property with vacant possession at the date of the report was in the order of £700,000. However, the valuers gave regard to the possibility that the property may be sold on to an organisation outside the care sector in which case the market value could be in the region of £500,000.

The valuation of £500,000 was reflected in the 31 March 2010 statements, giving rise to a negative revaluation reserve of £319,000. The Board of Trustees has considered the valuation and are of the opinion that no amendments to the valuation need to be made.

The Trustees have considered the condition and value of the remaining freehold and short leasehold properties occupied by the charity and, in their opinion, the service potential remains unchanged and not impaired. In addition, there are no legal, maintenance or other restrictions which would prevent the charity using the properties for their current purposes or for the charity's purposes.

8. Investments in subsidiaries

	2015	2014
	£	£
NAS Services Ltd		
The Society owns all of the share capital of NAS Services Ltd, a company registered in England, engaged in the provision of services.		
2 Ordinary £1 Shares	2	2
Autism UK Ltd		
The Society owns all of the share capital of Autism UK Ltd, a company registered in England, engaged in fundraising including Christmas card sales and promotional work.		
2 Ordinary £1 Shares	2	2
Other subsidiaries		
The Society has the following dormant subsidiaries all registered in England.		
Autistic Cards Ltd	100	100
Autism North West Ltd	2	2
Ideas on Autism Ltd	2	2
NAS Network Ltd	2	2
Autism Scotland Ltd	1	1
Autism Wales Ltd	1	1
Action for Autism Ltd	1	1
	113	113

9. Results of trading companies and parent charity

	The National Autistic Society	The National Autistic Society	NAS Academies Trust	NAS Academies Trust	NAS Services Ltd	NAS Services Ltd	Autism UK Ltd	Autism UK Ltd
	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Turnover	11,999	12,660	4,647	4,952	78,757	80,427	353	277
Covenanted income from subsidiaries	7,859	7,645	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating charges	(20,183)	(20,431)	(1,316)	(585)	(71,132)	(72,864)	(107)	(187)
(Loss)/Surplus	(325)	(126)	3,331	4,367	7,625	7,563	246	90
Administration and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	(12)	(9)
Surplus/(Deficit) before actuarial (Losses)/Gains	(325)	(126)	3,331	4,367	7,625	7,563	234	81
Actuarial (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	(3,300)	3,032	(64)	(95)	-	-	-	-
Amount covenanted to the charity	-	-	-	-	(7,625)	(7,563)	(234)	(81)
Retained (deficit) / surplus for the year	(3,625)	2,906	3,267	4,272	-	-	-	-

The net current assets and share capital and reserves for both NAS Services Limited and Autism UK Limited as 31 March 2015 was £2, representing the share capital in each company.

The net assets for the NAS Academies Trust as at 31 March 2015 was £7,659 (2014: £4,392).

The NAS Academies Trust is an exempt charity regulated by the Secretary of State for Education through the Education Funding Agency, and a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England (No.07954396) on 17 February 2012. Its charitable purpose relates to the advancement of education for the public benefit; it is not autism exclusive.

While its assets are not wholly owned by the NAS, the charity does exercise control over its affairs and its accounts are therefore consolidated with those of the charity.

The intention is that the Trust will operate a range of free schools that are autism specific. The first such school, the Thames Valley School, opened in September 2013. The second school, the Church Lawton School opened January 2015 and the third, The Vanguard School will open in January 2016.

All companies have an accounting year end of 31 March with the exception of the NAS Academies Trust which has a year end of 31 August as directed by the Education Funding Agency. The Trustees consider this to be appropriate.

10. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Trade debtors	6,241	19,402	-	2,747
Other debtors	159	113	159	113
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	-	6,640	7,996
Prepayments and accrued income	2,286	1,806	2,081	1,689
Total	8,686	21,321	8,880	12,545

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Loans repayable	299	300	299	300
Trade creditors	2,068	1,670	2,266	1,415
Taxation and social security	732	2,203	503	2,184
Accruals and Provisions	2,808	2,073	2,696	2,006
Fees invoiced in advance and deferred income	608	12,408	514	3,848
Total	6,515	18,654	6,278	9,753

12. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group		Charity	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Interest free mortgage (Note a)	200	200	200	200
Interest free mortgage (Note b)	-	1	-	1
City Road Loan (Note c)	1,933	2,231	1,933	2,231
Trafigura Loan (Note d)	18	18	18	18
Total	2,151	2,450	2,151	2,450

Note a: Property in Carpenter's Close is mortgaged to East Anglian Autistic Support Trust (EAAST). The loan of £200,000 is not required to be repaid provided the property is used for the benefit of autistic adults. The charge will be released on 30 November 2036.

Note b: The interest-free loan from a private landlord is repayable in equal instalments over the next year.

Note c: In October 2012 the charity purchased its Head Offices at 391-395 City Road for £4.25m plus £0.28m irrecoverable VAT, the purchase being part funded by a loan from the National Westminster Bank (acting through its

agent the Royal Bank of Scotland Plc) of £2.98m repayable over five years at a fixed rate of 4.12%, the balance payable on 3 October 2017, should a further loan not be taken out at that time, being £1.49m. The loan is secured on the purchased properties. Guarantees in respect of all amounts owed by the charity to the lender were provided by the charity's active trading companies, NAS Services Limited and Autism UK Limited, their exposure being joint and several.

Note d: An interest-free loan received from Trafigura in relation to the funding of Network Autism to be repaid over three years from 2017.

13. Borrowings

The creditors shown in Note 12 are repayable as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Loans repayable by instalment:				
Interest-free loan, instalments falling due between one and two years (2012: between one and five years)	-	1	-	1
Total	-	1	-	1
City Road loan				
Instalments falling due between one and two years	297	297	297	297
Instalments falling due between two and five years	893	893	893	893
Instalments falling due after five years	743	1,041	743	1,041
Total	1,933	2,231	1,933	2,231
Trafigura interest free loan				
Instalments falling due between one and two years	-	-	-	-
Instalments falling due between two and five years	18	12	18	12
Instalments falling due after five years	-	6	-	6
Total	18	18	18	18
Loans due after five years and not repayable by instalment:				
Interest free mortgages	200	200	200	200
Total	2,151	2,450	2,151	2,450

14. Movement on restricted funds

	Balance 1 April 2014	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31 March 2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Striving for Excellence:					
Education	1,795	285	(384)	-	1,696
Social and independent living support	858	912	(841)	-	929
Autism Expertise	505	251	(516)	-	240
Social Change & National Voice	795	620	(566)	-	849
Partner for Life	131	781	(836)	-	76
Supporting Professionals	186	841	(956)	-	71
Total	4,270	3,690	(4,099)	-	3,861

There are no significant restricted funds with balances of over £200,000 as at 31 March 2015.

14. Movement on restricted funds continued

Big Lottery Funding	Balance 1 April 2014	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance 31 March 2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
GLS08 Moving Forward Befriending BLF	49	85	(85)	-	49
DAL18 Empowering Families Big Lottery	11	113	(106)	-	18
NIR05 Big Lottery FSW	10	-	(10)	-	-
SCN29 Young Campaigners	16	23	(36)	-	2
Total	86	221	(238)	-	69

NAS Academies Trust	Balance 1 April 2014	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Actuarial losses	Balance 31 March 2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds	4,031	3,309	(104)	26	-	7,262
Restricted Revenue Grants	456	1,338	(1,203)	(26)	-	565
Pension Reserve	(95)	-	(9)	-	(64)	(168)
Total	4,392	4,647	(1,316)	-	(64)	7,659

15. Movement on unrestricted funds

	Balance 1 April 2014	Income	Expenditure	Capital transfers	Actuarial losses	Other transfers	Balance 31 March 2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General fund	6,286	87,418	(85,442)	(661)	-	(287)	7,314
Designated funds:							
Fixed assets	26,866	-	(1,736)	914	-	-	26,044
Minor project works inc developments, maintenance and dilapidations	337	-	-	(61)	-	78	354
IT Projects	400	-	-	(43)	-	(357)	-
IT Strategy development	-	-	-	-	-	150	150
Pay Award	-	-	-	-	-	500	500
Enterprise Activity Fund	249	-	-	(49)	-	(138)	62
Ask Autism Development	26	-	(26)	-	-	-	-
Supporter Events Development	-	-	-	-	-	117	117
Supporting Offender Network	-	-	-	-	-	15	15
Autism Education Trust	143	-	-	-	-	13	156
Growth and Development	361	-	(76)	(100)	-	(85)	100
National Autism Partnership Group	17	-	(17)	-	-	-	-
Branches Hub	55	-	(49)	-	-	(6)	-
Strategic Restructures	50	-	(50)	-	-	-	-
Local Authority Pension Scheme Reserve	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Total Designated Funds exc Fixed Assets	2,638	-	(218)	(253)	-	272	2,454
Revaluation fund	(319)	-	-	-	-	-	(319)
Total Designated Funds excluding pension reserve	35,471	87,418	(87,396)	-	-	-	35,493
Pension reserve	(13,489)	-	60	-	(3,300)	-	(16,729)
Total unrestricted funds	21,982	87,418	(87,336)	-	(3,300)	-	18,764

Capital transfers: These are amounts transferred to the fixed asset designated fund from general reserves or other designated funds to match expenditure on new fixed assets.

Purpose of designated funds:

Fixed assets	To identify net funds held as fixed assets (net of long-term loans used to finance fixed assets) used in the charity's operations which are not therefore available to fund short-term expenditure.
Minor project works incl developments, maintenance and dilapidations	To fund plans for non-standard maintenance and repairs to existing facilities in the next 12-18 months and underwrite the initial costs of small growth and development projects. This also includes potential dilapidations expected to be incurred in the next financial year.
IT Strategy Development	To support the development and roll-out of a new IT strategy over the next financial year.
Pay Award	This fund was created to enable some improvements to pay to be made, particularly for staff on the lowest pay grades.
Enterprise activity fund	This fund was created to fund the start-up of sustainable new small social enterprise initiatives in 2013-14 and will be used to continue to fund new initiatives throughout 2015-16.
Supporter Events Development	To underwrite the costs of developing new supporter fundraising events to be piloted in 2015-16.
Supporter Offender Network	To fund the costs of delivering events and newsletters for the offender's network in 2015-16.
Autism Education Trust	This fund was created to fund the ongoing development of work of the Autism Education Trust in addition to that work funded by the DfE.
Growth and Development	This fund was created to underwrite the start-up costs associated with the set up of new adult and children's services across the Operations division throughout 2015-16.
Revaluation fund	This fund sets aside the loss on the value of the Hayes Hospital property as measured at the end of the accounting period 2011-12. The building was brought back into use in 2012 as the Anderson School. The fund will be reviewed at the end of 2015-16 as the school reaches the end of its growth and development stage.
Local authority pension scheme reserve	This fund was created in recognition of a contingent liability relating to a Section 75 debt in the Somerset local authority pension scheme.
Pension Reserve	Represents the theoretical deficit on the defined benefit pension schemes as calculated using FRS17 methodology. See Note 21 for further details.

Completed Designated Funds

IT Projects	This fund was created to underwrite the costs of IT projects and was spent in 2014-15
Ask Autism Development	This fund was created to underwrite the continuing development costs of Ask Autism.
Donor acquisitions	This fund was created to underwrite the costs of a significant five-year programme investing in donor acquisition to increase voluntary income. This has now been spent.
National Autism Partnership Group	This fund was used to enable NAS continued involvement in the National Autism Partnership Group throughout 2014-15.
Branches Hub	To underwrite the costs associated with the continued development of branch hubs across the UK throughout 2014-15.
Strategic Restructures	To underwrite the cost of restructures across the NAS and enabled us to implement our new five year strategy.

16. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2015 £'000	Restricted funds 2015 £'000	NAS AT Restricted funds 2015 £'000	Total funds 2015 £'000
Fixed assets	25,718	1,491	7,261	34,470
Net current assets	11,908	2,388	566	14,862
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(2,133)	(18)	-	(2,151)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	(16,729)	-	(168)	(16,897)
Net assets including pension liabilities	18,764	3,861	7,659	30,284

17. Operating lease commitments

Operating lease commitments for the financial year to 31 March 2015 are analysed as follows:

	Property		Other leases	
	2015 £'000	2014 £'000	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Operating leases which expire:				
In less than one year	417	838	375	307
Between two and five years	446	600	523	392
In over five years	2,062	1,111	28	-
	2,925	2,549	926	699

Under the Academies Trust we have a 125-year lease with Cheshire East Borough Council for Church Lawton School with an annual value of one peppercorn if demanded.

18. Capital commitments

	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Committed building projects are:		
Ongoing projects		
NAS AT		
Thames Valley School	45	45
Church Lawton School	149	4
	194	49
Total committed	194	49

No funds are required to be set aside for NAS Academies Trust commitments as the costs of these works will be met through the Trust's restricted funds.

19. Taxation

The charity's activities are exempt from taxation under the *Corporation Tax Act 2010*.

20. Information regarding employees and Trustees

Average number of employed, bank and agency staff calculated on a full time equivalence (FTE) during the year:

	2015 FTE	2014 FTE
Footing the Bill	26	30
Striving for Excellence:		
Education	707	747
Social and independent living support	1,738	1,713
Autism Expertise	31	48
Social Change & National Voice	37	29
Partner for Life	52	63
Supporting Professionals	59	42
Governance	2	2
Behind the scenes	129	103
Total	2,781	2,777

The average number of employed staff in the year was 3,421 (2014: 3,610).

Staff costs comprise:	2015 £'000	2014 £'000
Gross wages and salaries	55,197	57,696
Agency staff	4,065	2,899
Social security costs	3,956	4,588
Pension costs	2,156	1,781
Total	65,374	66,964

The number of senior staff paid over £60,000 during the year (salary and taxable benefits excluding pension contributions) was as follows:

Salary range	2015 Number	2014 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	13	10
£70,001 - £80,000	8	8
£80,001 - £90,000	1	2
£90,001 - £100,000	2	2
£100,001 - £110,000	-	-
£130,001 - £140,000	2	2
Total	26	24

20. Information regarding employees and Trustees continued

The number of senior staff to whom retirement benefits are accruing are as follows:

	2015 Number	2014 Number
Defined contribution schemes:		
NAS Stakeholder Scheme	17	17
Defined benefit schemes:		
Brent Pension Scheme	-	-
Teachers' Pension Scheme	6	6
Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme	1	1
Total	24	24
	£'000	£'000
NAS contribution was:		
Defined contribution schemes	93	93
Defined benefit schemes	75	75
Total	168	168

Further details of all NAS pension schemes are shown in Note 21.

No Trustee or person related or connected by business to them, has received any remuneration from the charity during the year (2014: none).

21 Trustees and councillors were reimbursed expenses during the year totalling £7,466 (2014: £10,301, 26 Trustees and councillors). Out of this total, £1,553 was reimbursed to Trustees and Governors of the Academies Trust (2014:

£1,145). This principally represents reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending Trustees' meetings.

The charity purchased insurance costing £26,394 (2014: £26,394) to protect the Trustees and Directors from loss arising from liability for negligence, default or breach of trust or duty, other than a breach committed in reckless disregard of whether or not the act or omission was such a breach.

21. Pension commitments

The NAS operates both defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes for the benefit of its employees.

Defined benefit schemes

The disclosures below relate to the funded liabilities within the London Borough of Brent Pension Fund (Brent Scheme), Somerset County Council Pension (Somerset Scheme) and Royal County of Berkshire Pension (Berkshire Scheme), which are part of the Local Government Pension Schemes. The NAS participates in the schemes which provide defined benefits, based on members' final pensionable salary.

Alongside the above pension schemes, the NAS also contributes to the national, statutory teachers' pension funds on behalf of its teaching staff. See details below.

Teachers' Pension Scheme. Teaching staff employed by the NAS are eligible for membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, which is a national, statutory contributory, unfunded defined benefit scheme administered by the Teachers' Pension Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education and Skills. Pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of the Government Actuary. The NAS has 55 active members (2013: 57 active members).

Every five years the Government Actuary conducts an actuarial review of the scheme, using normal actuarial principles. The cost of pension increases is excluded from the valuation and consequently neither teachers nor employers contribute to this added value, which is met directly by the Exchequer. Employer's contributions in the year totalled £357,113 (2014: £361,626).

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme. Teaching staff employed by the NAS in Scotland are eligible for membership of the Scheme, which is a national, statutory contributory, unfunded defined benefit scheme administered by the Scottish Public Pensions Agency. Pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of the Government Actuary. The NAS has 8 active members (2014: 10 active members). Employer's contributions in the year totalled £61,931.31 (2014: £63,699.19).

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standard No. 17 - Retirement Benefits (FRS17), disclosure of certain information concerning assets, liabilities, income and expenditure relating to pension schemes is required. This information is set out below.

Brent Scheme

Contributions

The employer's regular contributions to the Brent Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2015 are estimated to be £784,000.

Assumptions

The latest actuarial valuation of the NAS's liabilities took place as at 31 March 2013. The principal assumptions used by the independent qualified actuaries in updating the latest valuation of the scheme for FRS17 purposes were:

Principal financial assumptions

Brent Scheme	2015 %pa	2014 %pa	2013 %pa	2012 %pa
Inflation	-	-	-	-
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.1	4.4	5.1	4.8
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	-	-	-	-
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.5
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-	-
Discount rate	3.2	4.3	4.5	4.8

Principal demographic assumptions:

Brent Scheme	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March
	2015	2014	2013	2015	2014	2013
	Males	Males	Males	Males	Females	Females
Post-retirement mortality	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts	Standards SAPS Normal Health Light Amounts
Rating to above base table * (years)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scaling to above base table rates**	CMI_2010	CMI_2010	100% CMI_2010	CMI_2010	CMI_2010	80% CMI_2010
Cohort improvement factors (from 2007)	LT rate	LT rate	LT rate	LT rate	LT rate	LT rate
Minimum underpin to improvement factors (pa)	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)	22.0	22.0	23.8	24.3	24.3	26.6
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 45)	24.4	24.4	25.6	26.8	26.8	28.6

* A rating of x years means that members of the Fund are assumed to follow the mortality pattern of the base table for an individual x years older than them. The ratings shown apply to normal health retirement.

** The scaling factors shown apply to normal health retirements.

Expected return on assets

Brent Scheme	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
	%pa	%pa
Equities	3.2	6.7
Bonds	3.2	3.8
Property	3.2	4.8
Cash	3.2	3.7

The NAS employs a building block approach in determining the rate of return on the Brent Scheme assets. Historically markets are studied and assets with higher volatility are assumed to generate higher returns consistent with widely accepted capital movement principles. The assumed rate of return on each asset class is set out within this note. The overall expected rate of return on assets is then derived by aggregating the expected rate of return for each asset class over the actual asset allocation for the scheme at 31 March 2013.

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet

Brent Scheme	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2013	31 March 2012
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Value as at:				
Notional value of assets	12,301	10,827	12,639	10,728
Present value of liabilities	(27,174)	(22,865)	(27,062)	(22,187)
Net pension (liabilities)	(14,873)	(12,038)	(14,423)	(11,459)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2013
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Period ending			
Current service cost	381	461	407
Past service cost	-	-	-
Interest cost	978	1,216	1,069
Expected return on assets	(674)	(769)	(700)
Losses on curtailments and settlements	-	-	19
Settlement cost	-	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	685	908	795

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Opening present value of liabilities	22,865	27,062	22,187
Current service cost	381	461	407
Interest cost	978	1,216	1,069
Contribution by participants	94	101	111
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	3,525	(5,369)	3,645
Losses on curtailments	-	-	19
Estimated benefits paid out	(669)	(606)	(376)
Past service cost	-	-	-
Net increase in liabilities from disposals and acquisitions	-	-	-
Curtailments	-	-	-
Settlements	-	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	27,174	22,865	27,062

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	10,827	12,639	10,728
Expected return on assets	674	769	700
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	598	(2,887)	773
Contribution by employers	777	811	703
Contribution by participants	94	101	111
Net benefits paid out	(669)	(606)	(376)
Closing fair value of assets	12,301	10,827	12,639

Actual return on assets

Expected return on assets	674	769	700
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	598	(2,887)	773
Actual return on assets	1,272	(2,118)	1,473

Analysis of amounts recognised in STRGL*

Total actuarial (losses)	(2,927)	2,482	(2,872)
Total losses in STRGL	(2,927)	2,482	(2,872)

* STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

Brent Scheme:	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2013	31 March 2012	31 March 2011
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fair value of assets	12,301	10,827	12,639	10,728	10,470
Present value of liabilities	(27,174)	(22,865)	(27,062)	(22,187)	(20,380)
Deficit	(14,873)	(12,038)	(14,423)	(11,459)	(9,910)

In accordance with paragraph 77(o) of FRS17 (as revised), the assets for the current period and previous two periods are measured at current bid price. Asset values previously measured at mid-market value for periods ending 2008 and 2007 have been re-measured for this purpose.

History of experience gains and losses

	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	31 March 2013 £'000	31 March 2012 £'000	31 March 2011 £'000
Experience gains/(losses) on assets	598	(2,887)	773	(827)	(1,530)
Experience gains/(losses) on liabilities	194	3,778	35	(268)	1,010

Somerset Scheme

Contributions: The employer's regular contributions to the Somerset Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2015 are estimated to be £54,000.

Principal financial assumptions	2015 %pa	2014 %pa	2013 %pa	2012 %pa
Inflation	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.3
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.2	4.6	4.7	4.7
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	1	1	1.4	1.4
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.5
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-	3.0
Discount rate	3.3	4.4	4.1	4.6
Discount rate* – real	0.1	0.8	0.8	1.3

* These assumptions are set with reference to market conditions at 31 March 2015.

Our estimate of the duration of the Employer's liabilities is 18 years.

* The discount rate is the yield at the 18 year point on the Merrill Lynch AA rated corporate bond curve which has been chosen to meet the requirements of FRS17 and with consideration of the duration of the employer's liabilities. This is consistent with the approach used at the last accounting date.

Principal demographic assumptions:

We have adopted a set of demographic assumptions that are consistent with those used for the funding valuation as at 31 March 2013. The post retirement mortality tables adopted are the S1PA tables with a multiplier of 90%. These Base tables are then projected using the CMI 2013 Model, allowing for a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% per annum.

Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)

	31 March 2015 Males	31 March 2014 Females	31 March 2013 Males	31 March 2013 Females
Retiring today	23.7	26.1	23.6	26.0
Retiring in 20 years	26.0	28.4	25.8	28.3

Assumptions made

Members will exchange half of their commutable pension for cash retirement. Members will retire at one retirement age for all tranches of benefit, which will be the pension weighted average tranche and 10% of active members will take up the option under the new LGPS to pay 50% of contributions for 50% of benefits.

Expected return on assets

For accounting years beginning on or after 1 January 2015, the expected return and the interest cost will be replaced with a single net interest cost, which will effectively set the expected return equal to the discount rate. Therefore we are not required to disclose an expected return assumption for the year 31 March 2016.

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2013
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Value as at:			
Notional value of assets	2,840	2,571	2,308
Present value of liabilities	4,696	4,022	4,250
Net pension (liabilities)	(1,856)	(1,451)	(1,942)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
	£'000	£'000
Period ending		
Current service cost	59	58
Past service cost	-	-
Interest cost	176	173
Expected return on assets	(159)	(129)
Losses on curtailments and settlements	-	-
Settlement cost	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	76	102

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Period ending	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
Opening present value of liabilities	4,022	4,250
Current service cost	59	58
Interest cost	176	173
Contribution by participants	12	13
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	543	(348)
Losses on curtailments	-	-
Net benefits paid out	(116)	(124)
Past service cost	-	-
Net increase in liabilities from disposals and acquisitions	-	-
Curtailments	-	-
Settlements	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	4,696	4,022

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	2,571	2,308
Expected return on assets	159	129
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	170	202
Contribution by employers	44	43
Contribution by participants	12	13
Net benefits paid out	(116)	(124)
Closing fair value of assets	2,840	2,571

Actual return on assets	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
	£'000	£'000
Expected return on assets	159	129
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	170	202
Actual return on assets	329	331

Analysis of amounts recognised in STRGL*

Total actuarial (losses)	(373)	550
Total losses in STRGL	(373)	550

* STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March
	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fair value of assets	2,840	2,571	2,308	2,047	2,081
Present value of liabilities	(4,696)	(4,022)	(4,250)	(3,756)	(3,245)
Deficit	(1,856)	(1,451)	(1,942)	(1,709)	(1,164)

History of experience gains and losses

Experience gains/(losses) on assets	170	202	195	(105)	(80)
Experience gains/(losses) on liabilities	-	439	-	-	(156)

The table below sets out the impact of a change in the discount rates on the defined benefit obligation and projected service cost along with a +/- one-year age rating adjustment to the mortality assumption on the Somerset Scheme.

Sensitivity analysis	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	4,616	4,696	4,778
Projected service cost	69	71	73
Adjustment to long-term salary increase	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	4,707	4,696	4,685
Projected service cost	71	71	71
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	4,768	4,696	4,696
Projected service cost	73	71	70
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+1 year	none	-1 year
Present value of total obligation	4,537	4,696	4,857
Projected service cost	69	71	73

For the adjustment to the mortality age rating assumption, we are essentially assuming a member has the mortality of someone a year older or a year younger, for example, under +1 Year we assumed that a 40 year old actually has the mortality of a 41 year old.

Berkshire Scheme

The LPGS is a funded defined-benefit scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The pension charge for the year for the LGPS was £24,934 (2014: £13,099). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 16.7% for employers and 6.5% for employees depending on salary.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

Contributions: The employer's regular contributions to the Berkshire Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2015 are estimated to be £27,000.

Principal financial assumptions	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	01 Sep 2013
	%pa	%pa	%pa
Inflation (RPI)	3.4	3.7	3.7
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.4	4.7	4.7
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	1.0	1.0	1.0
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.6	2.9	2.9
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-
Discount rate	3.5	4.6	4.7
Discount rate* – real	0.1	0.9	1.0

* The assumptions are set with reference to market conditions at 31 March 2015. Our estimate of the duration of the Employer's liabilities is 32 years.

The discount rate is the annualised yield at the 25 year point on Merrill Lynch AA-rated corporate bond yield curve which has been chosen to meet the requirements of FRS17 and with considerations of the duration of the Employer's liabilities. This is consistent with the approach used at the last accounting date.

Principal demographic assumptions:

We have adopted a set of demographic assumptions that are consistent with those used for the funding valuation as at 31 March 2013. The post retirement mortality tables adopted are the S1PA tables with a multiplier of 90%. These base tables are then projected using the CMI 2012 Model, allowing for a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% per annum.

Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)	31 March	31 March	31 March	31 March
	2015	2015	2014	2014
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Retiring today	22.8	26.1	22.7	26.0
Retiring in 20 Years	25.1	28.4	24.9	28.3

Assumptions made

Members will exchange half of their commutable pension for cash retirement. Members will retire at one retirement age for all tranches of benefit, which will be the pension weighted average tranche retirement age and 10% of active members will take up the option under the new LGPS to pay 50% of contributions for 50% of benefits.

Expected return on assets

The expected return on assets is based on the long-term future expected investment return for each asset class as at the beginning of the period (ie as at 1 April 2014 for the year to 31 March 2015). The return on gilts and other bonds are assumed to be the gilt yield and corporate bond yield respectively at the relevant date. The returns on equities and property are then assumed to be a margin above gilt yields.

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	01 Sep 2013 £'000
Value as at:			
Notional value of assets	127	84	59
Present value of liabilities	(295)	(179)	(157)
Net pension (liabilities)	(168)	(95)	(98)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000
Period ending		
Current service cost	31	18
Past service cost	-	-
Interest cost	9	5
Expected return on assets	(6)	(3)
Losses on curtailments and settlements	-	-
Settlement cost	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	34	20

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Opening present value of liabilities	179	157
Current service cost	31	18
Interest cost	9	5
Contribution by participants	9	6
Actuarial (losses)/gains on liabilities	67	(7)
Losses on curtailments	-	-
Net benefits paid out	-	-
Past service cost	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	295	179

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000
Opening fair value of assets	84	59
Expected return on assets	6	3
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	3	(1)
Contribution by employers	25	17
Contribution by participants	9	6
Net benefits paid out	-	-
Closing fair value of assets	127	84

Actual return on assets	
Expected return on assets	6
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	3
Actual return on assets	9

Analysis of amounts recognised in STRGL*

Total actuarial (losses)	(64)	6
Total losses in STRGL	(64)	6

* STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	01 Sep 2013 £'000
Fair value of assets	127	84	59
Present value of liabilities	(295)	(179)	(157)
Deficit	(168)	(95)	(98)

History of experience gains and losses

Experience gains/(losses) on assets		(1)	-
Experience gains/(losses) on liabilities		-	-

The table below sets out the impact of a change in the discount rates on the defined benefit obligation and projected service cost along with a +/- one-year age rating adjustment to the mortality assumption on the Berkshire Scheme.

	£'000	£'000	£'000
Sensitivity analysis			
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	286	295	304
Projected service cost	42	43	44
Adjustment to long term salary increase	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	297	295	293
Projected service cost	43	43	43
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	302	295	288
Projected service cost	44	43	42
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+1 year	none	-1 year
Present value of total obligation	285	295	305
Projected service cost	42	43	44

For the adjustment to the mortality age rating assumption, we are essentially assuming a member has the mortality of someone a year older or a year younger, for example, under +1 Year we assumed that a 40 year old actually has the mortality of a 41 year old.

Defined contribution scheme

Scottish Widows Group Personal Pension Scheme. This group personal pension scheme is the NAS' main scheme. The scheme is administered by Scottish Widows. There are currently 593 active members. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the NAS. Pension costs charged in the SOFA represent the contributions payable by the NAS in the year. Employer's contribution for the year totalled £672,835. This scheme was started on 1 April 2012. It replaces the previous scheme with Standard Life and is designed to provide better benefits to members.

Contingent liability

The Trustees have considered the current net pension liability in both the Somerset and Brent pension schemes. There is only a small active membership in the Somerset LGPS and, given the recent performance of the scheme, they have decided to set aside funds in recognition of the Section 75 debt should the NAS cease to be an active member of the scheme due to the retirement or departure of its remaining active members. In the 2011/12 accounts the sum of £1.0m was set aside. Note 15 refers.

The Trustees do not consider that they have the same exposure on the Brent Scheme given the larger number of active members and the younger age profile of those members.

TPS Pension Provision

The Trustees have made a provision of £1.077m in the accounts for additional expected pension costs.





“It has helped tremendously to be reminded that we are not alone.”

Family member

We are the leading UK charity for people on the autism spectrum (including Asperger syndrome) and their families. With the help of our members, supporters and volunteers we provide information, support and pioneering services, and campaign for a better world for people on the autism spectrum.

Around 700,000 people in the UK are on the autism spectrum. Together with their families they make up around 2.8 million people whose lives are touched by autism every single day. From good times to challenging times, The National Autistic Society is there at every stage, to help transform the lives of everyone living with autism.

We are proud of the difference we make.

The National Autistic Society
393 City Road
London EC1V 1NG

National office Scotland
Central Chambers
109 Hope Street
Glasgow G2 6LL

National office Northern Ireland
59 Malone Road
Belfast BT9 6SA

National office Cymru
6/7 Village Way
Greenmeadow Springs
Business Park
Tongwynlais
Cardiff CF15 7NE

www.autism.org.uk