The National Autistic Society

Trustees' annual report and accounts

Directors' report and financial statements

Year ended: 31 March 2016

Until everyone understands

Last year at The National

WERE A **PARTNER FOR LIFE** FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

2,583 families attended an EarlyBird course to find out more about autism after their child was diagnosed

MILLIONS visited our new mobile-friendly website

20,000 people received local support from branches

SUPPORTED PEOPLE THROUGH OUR
SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

More than **2,000** people supported through our schools and services

163,000 hours of community support delivered

369 autistic adults supported in residential care or supported living services

Two Cullum Centres opened in mainstream schools

EDUCATED
WIDER SOCIETY

12,000 asked the Government to tackle diagnosis waiting times and they listened

200 MSPs contacted in the Scottish election campaign

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

Autistic Society we…

MAXIMISED **EFFICIENCY** BEHIND THE SCENES

10,000 supporters now giving regularly

2,000 volunteers

Our largest ever **London Marathon team**

£235,395

raised in World Autism Awareness Week 2015

Thousands

of pupils reached in first ever Schools' Autism Awareness Week

7,000

people fed into research for our *Too Much Information* campaign

TOO MUCH INFORMATION

Five

of the six main parties in Wales committed to an *Autism Act*

SHARED PRACTICE WITH **PROFESSIONALS**

11,000 professionals trained

Step into MyWorld **1 in 34** teachers signed up to *MyWorld*

8,000 professionals part of Network Autism

NETWORK AUTISM

AUTISM ACCREDITATION

Feltham Young Offender Institution first prison to get autism-accredited

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

Chris, who was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome as an adult and struggled to get post-diagnosis support.

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The National Autistic Society

Cover photo: Sister and brother Samyukta and Indranil. Indranil was diagnosed with autism and severe learning disability aged two.

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**.

Pupils at our Thames Valley School helped to promote our information campaign for teachers, *MyWorld*.

From the Chair of the Board of **Trustees and the CEO**

Over the last year, The National Autistic Society has helped tens of thousands of autistic people and their families to get the support, understanding and appreciation they deserve.

This was a special year for us, marking the 50th anniversary of our first school and indeed the first autism-specific school in the world. It is fitting that in the year when we celebrated this anniversary, we clarified our overarching approach to making the biggest impact on the lives of autistic people as continually developing an understanding of good autism practice and sharing that with the world. This is what Sybil Elgar School has done for 50 years, with so many autism practitioners and researchers working and developing their knowledge through this amazing educational centre.

We have developed our understanding of autism practice further this year, by expanding enterprise opportunities for people we support in our care services and developing new ways to support autistic children learning in mainstream settings.

Alongside our work on a new outcomes framework for our services, these pioneering new developments will help us create further good practice, which we will share with the autism community in the UK and the wider world.

Through our Helpline, EarlyBird training, website and branches, we have passed on to millions of autistic people and families the knowledge we have built up in our 50 plus years of practice. Our branch network is the biggest and strongest it has ever been, with branch volunteers delivering localised support to over 20,000 people.

We have also spread our knowledge to professionals working throughout education, care and health services. We have done ground-breaking work with Feltham Young Offenders Institute, making this the first criminal justice service in the world to be accredited for autism practice. Our *MyWorld* campaign has taken a similarly innovative approach to educating teachers, with one in 34 of UK teaching professionals now receiving regular, high-quality information about autism and good educational practice from our charity.

Finally, we have helped policymakers and wider society to understand the needs of autistic people better. The commitment from the NHS and Department of Health to record autism diagnosis numbers is a landmark in the history of autism in the UK.

We have invested in rigorous development of a new campaign, to tackle the lack of public understanding of autism: *Too Much Information.* Launched in April 2016, this will be the UK's biggest ever programme to improve public understanding and reduce the social isolation experienced by far too many autistic people and families.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our charity in the last year. It is only with your help that we can achieve our goal of all 700,000 autistic people in the UK feeling supported, understood and appreciated.

Carol Homden

Dr Carol Homden, CBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Mark Lever

Mark Lever
Chief Executive

Structure, governance and management

Our 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. Members can contribute to the work and success of our charity 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 National Forum. As at 31 March 2016 there were 149 branches (up from 107 on 31 March 2015) across the UK.

The National Autistic Society 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.

Charitable objects and public benefit

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

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.

Under the law of Scotland, The National Autistic Society is established for the public benefit through:

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

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

The National Forum

Members of our charity elect a Forum of 40 members. A further five members may be appointed by the Board. Forum members act as a sounding board for the Trustees on major issues, engaging with regional management and branches as well as serving on some committees and working parties.

Forum members normally hold office for a term of four years and may stand again for re-election for one further term. However, if a member is also a Trustee, then their term of office on the Forum may continue until the member stands down from the Board. Forum members are elected by National Autistic Society members in the region in which they live, the regions being defined as Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, North and Central England and Southern England.

The Board of 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.

The Chair and the Trustees' Governance Reference Group keep under review the skills and experience of the Board, identifying any gaps and taking action accordingly. New Trustees participate in a Trustee induction programme that includes 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.

Board vacancies are advertised with potential candidates being interviewed by a small panel of Trustees, which includes the Chair. In addition, candidates are interviewed by a panel of autistic people who provide advice and recommendations to the Trustees' panel. Appointments are confirmed by the full Board and are subject to retrospective ratification by the membership at the next AGM.

Up to eight Trustees may also be members of the National Forum and members of the Forum who are interested in becoming a Trustee are encouraged to gain experience of the Board's work by serving as a co-opted member of one of the Board's committees. However, the selection process for Board appointments is the same for both Forum members and others. The Board seeks to ensure 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 section on the next page about decision-making). Trustees also attend the meetings of the National Forum (whether or not they are Forum members) 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 on being elected and every three years thereafter while they remain a Trustee.

Stewart Rapley
Trustee

"My link with all things autistic started after my youngest son (then 13) was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome following some difficulties at school. I was subsequently also diagnosed. My search for support and information led me to The National Autistic Society.

"Given my professional experience in helping large organisations with change, it was suggested I seek election to the Council (now the National Forum) – where I have served for three years. I was elected as a Trustee from the Council in 2015 and hope to use my experience to support the charity as it goes through the next challenging years.

"Visiting services at Daldorch House School and Catrine Bank last year, what struck me was the sheer scale of the effort, resource and investment required – I believe there were around 500 staff required in various roles to operate the sites, providing support for about 50 autistic people. There is an old African saying that 'it takes the whole village to bring up a child'. It was a great reminder that we are in this to make a permanent difference in the lives of individuals – and that takes a lot of effort.

"The highlight for me last year has to be the *Too Much Information* campaign. This chimed with me personally as it seemed to get to the heart of things, has been referenced by contacts of both my wife and son in their work contexts and has clearly had a major impact nationally.

"I also want to highlight the simple achievement of keeping going, in what is a very tough environment for charities right now. Our day-to-day work is carried out by many dedicated folk working away quietly on things that contribute, directly or indirectly, to providing an improved quality of life for those we seek to serve."

Trustee induction and training

All Trustees are issued with a comprehensive manual. This sets out their role and responsibilities as Trustees, including the Code of Governance and Trustees' responsibility for risk management, together with key policies such as 'Matters Reserved to the Board', 'Reserves and Investment' and 'Financial Authorisation Levels'. Terms of reference for the various Board committees are also included, together with an explanation of the senior management structure.

Specific induction programmes are tailored to match the experience of individual Trustees but will generally include briefing sessions with members of the Senior Management Team, visits to one or more of our schools and adult services and on occasion, external training in the roles and responsibilities of Trustees.

Periodically, an audit of Trustees' skills and experience is undertaken and this helps the Chair, in discussion with individual Trustees, to identify further training that will enhance their contribution to the charity's governance.

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 Reference Group, consisting of the Chair of Trustees, the Vice Chair (who is also Chair of the Plans and Resources Committee) and the National Forum Chair, 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 National Autistic Society are managed by the Chief Executive, supported by a strategic management group

of eight Directors, who lead the functional activities: the Director of the Centre for Autism; the Director of Finance; the Director of Fundraising and Marketing; the Director of External Affairs and Social Change; the Director, Scotland; the Director of Human Resources; the Director of IT; and a new role, Director of Governance introduced in July 2015.

Diversity

We are 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.

As part of our commitment to diversity, we are equally keen to ensure we continue to promote a strong connection with people on the autism spectrum in all our recruitment and employment practices. We are strengthening the involvement of autistic people in staff recruitment and have started a review of our recruitment practices to make sure that we are as open as possible to autistic applicants. We continue to roll out the mentoring support programme to employees on the autism spectrum, 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 know that staff development and engagement are crucial to our organisation's future. This year, we have undertaken a staff survey, which received our highest ever response rate. We have also committed to introducing new channels for staff communication to allow more staff to participate in strategic discussions and have continued to operate a Staff Forum, with representatives from across the charity, who are consulted on changes to policies, staff support and strategy.

We want to continue to ensure our approach to pay is not biased or discriminatory, and as such, our proposed new pay scale is continuously being tested to ensure it responds only to the business needs and our statutory obligations, hence allowing us to recruit and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

Honorary offices

The National Autistic Society 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.

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 40th anniversary celebrations and attended a concert by our 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.

Our President, Jane Asher

Our Patron, HRH the Countess of Wessex

Key volunteers, staff and advisers

Patron: Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex

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 Whimple
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, Chair of Trustees
Krishnaswamy Murali, Vice Chair
Judy Berkowicz, Member of the National Forum
Clare Beswick, Member of the National Forum
Dr Sophie Castell, Member of the National Forum
Felicity Chadwick-Histed, Member of the National Forum

President: Jane Asher

Trustees:

Janet Corcoran, Member of the National Forum
Stephen Davies
Peter Davis
David Harbott
Kevin Healey, resigned August 2016
Prof Sylvia Johnson
Ash Merchant, Non-Councillor Trustee, resigned March 2016
Stewart Rapley
Pamela Reitemeier, Member of the National Forum
Mike Stanton, National Forum Chair

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
Mark Milton, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Executive (to October 2015)

Strategic Management Group:

Jenny Paterson, Scotland
Carol Povey, Centre for Autism
Wande Showunmi, Human Resources
Nick Slowe, IT

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.

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 & Hamlins London, 3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ
Stone King LLP, Boundary House, 91 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6HR

Company Secretary:
Paul Harper (from 1 July 2015)

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 living with autism and operate across the UK.

In 2015, to support our new strategy, we developed an organisation-wide theory of change, to set out how our activities lead to positive outcomes for autistic people. A simplified version is below. This identifies that our schools, care services and Centre for Autism are the foundation for our knowledge about how to help autistic people get the understanding, support and appreciation they deserve.

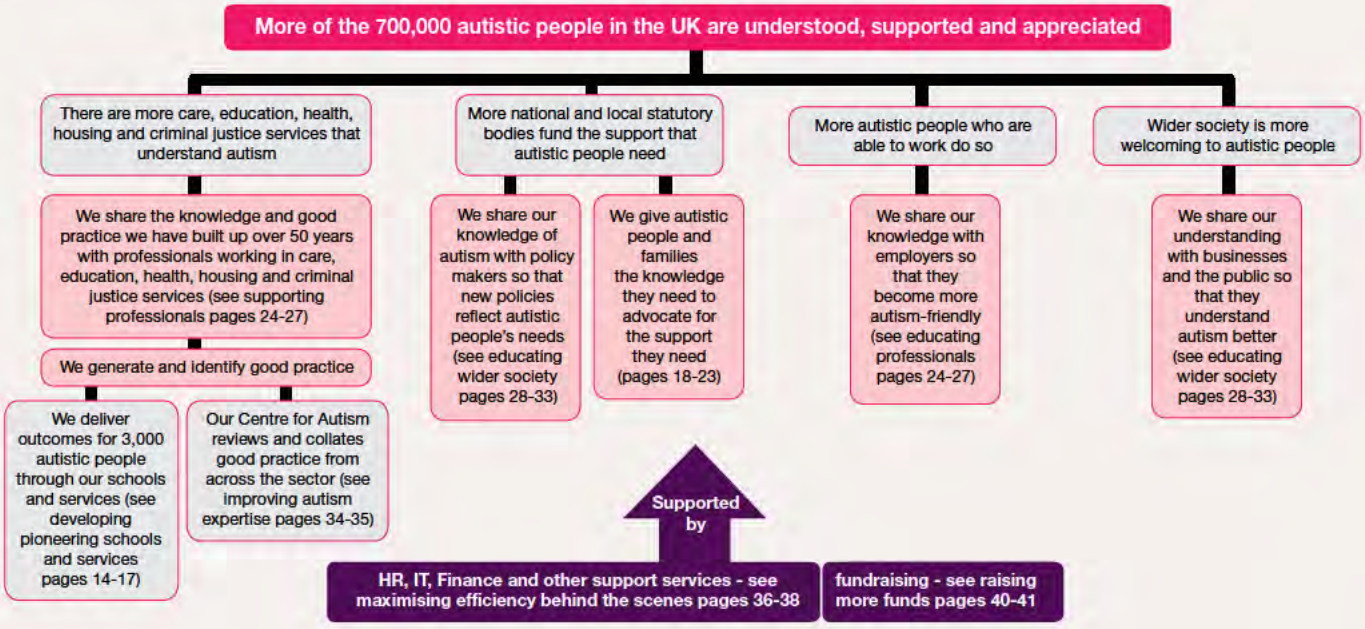
Our other activities are focused on:

- sharing our knowledge with autistic people and families who need to advocate for better support, see pages 18 to 23
- sharing good autism practice with thousands of professionals working in public services, see pages 24 to 27
- educating policymakers, businesses and wider society about autism, see pages 28 to 33.

To encapsulate our new theory of change and with input from autistic people and families as well as pro bono support from the agency Bow and Arrow, we developed a new core belief to help our staff, volunteers and stakeholders understand what we believe about what needs to change (see theory of change diagram below) and updated our strapline to reflect the key role of understanding in our work.

Why do we call people 'autistic'?

In the last year, we have changed the language we use to describe autistic people, based on research with autistic people and their families. We prefer to use the terms 'autistic' or 'on the autism spectrum' rather than 'has autism' or 'with autism' as autistic people told us that they preferred the term 'autistic'.



Developing pioneering education and care services

Ever since we opened the first autism-specific school in the world in 1965 and the first autism-specific residential service in the UK in 1974, we have sought to run innovative and excellent schools and services. This year, we have focused on developing education support in mainstream settings and expanding the opportunities for the adults we support to engage in enterprise activities.

Delivering support in mainstream schools

The majority of children on the autism spectrum attend mainstream schools.[1] So we have worked closely with the Cullum Family Trust to deliver a new approach to autism education and support in mainstream schools.

Our new Cullum Centres in Surrey are operated by mainstream schools and run by staff trained by our charity. The staff at each centre provide up to 20 autistic students with the specialist support they need to attend classes and give them a calm environment to re-adjust in if they become overwhelmed. Pupils are also able to access occupational and speech and language therapies when needed.

The centres are a response to a local need, identified by us and Surrey County Council, for specialist support for autistic students who have good academic potential but find it difficult to learn in busy school environments.

"We are absolutely delighted to be part of this innovative project that we believe will make a huge difference to many autistic school children."

Peter Cullum CBE

The first two centres, based at Salesian School (Chertsey) and Rodborough (Milford) opened in September 2015, with work ongoing at Hinchley Wood, to enable the third centre to open in September 2016.

So far, 11-15 pupils have accessed our Cullum Centres at the Salesian and Rodborough Schools, with approximately a further 12 due to start in September 2016. We have delivered training to more than 60 school staff.

"The centre has only been open a few weeks but it's already having a really positive impact. The expertise of the staff has helped the students to get the most out of lessons and the building itself has given them a comfortable place to refocus if they become overwhelmed. We look forward to supporting autistic children to reach their full potential."

James Kibble, Head teacher at Salesian School

"It's made a huge difference to the whole school. You can see the difference in pupils as they enter the centre, it immediately calms them down."

Teacher at Rodborough School

[1] Department for Education (January 2014). *DfE Special educational needs in England: January 2014*

A pupil at our Cullum Centre at Rodborough School, where autistic children can get the specialist support they need in a mainstream school.

Encouraging enterprise

We want autistic people to be able to contribute skills and talents to society and that means recognising people's skills, interests and potential, and giving people we support the opportunities to do so. Our innovative enterprise projects give people we support the opportunity to be part of a team, have a role in a meaningful enterprise, build their confidence and self-esteem and meet local people in their community. It also helps us to build our expertise in how to support autistic people into employment – currently only 16% of autistic adults in the UK are in full-time paid employment and we want to learn from our experiences so we can spread good practice further.

"It feels good to be involved in the working world and to be part of such a positive team. This has helped me to make friends and increase my independence."

Martin, an autistic adult volunteering at the café

Our Café Autisan opened at Whalley Abbey in Lancashire at the end of June 2015. The café, which includes a gift shop and art gallery, supports individuals to gain experience in catering and retail, and offers both ASDAN and NVQ qualifications. Although Café Autisan only opened in June 2015, one individual has already been supported into employment.

Elsewhere, our Willow Autisan shop in Mildenhall opened in December 2015. It sells materials produced in sewing, craft and woodwork sessions at our Old Barns Resource Centre.

We have opened St Mark's House, an autism resource centre focusing on skills and training in South Wales, and Preston Autism Resource Centre, which will support up to 25 people with training, educational, vocational and enterprise activities.

Our enterprise activities are not limited to selling products. In November 2015, we were proud to hold our first nationwide art competition across all of our adult services which ended with an exhibition of the works being held at The Cob Gallery in Camden, London before being showcased at regional venues.

In addition, our Forest School in Somerset was recognised as a runner up in the LaingBuisson national awards which recognise and celebrate industry excellence and innovative services in the public, private and third sectors. The school's structured sessions give the people we support a chance to engage with nature and participate in a wide variety of outdoor activities in a safe and positive environment.

"Forest School has been a great learning opportunity for me. [It] has opened up a lot of work opportunities especially when I get my Level One qualification. It's always fun, I like working outside with the people from The National Autistic Society."

Young man we support in our Forest School

We also:

- opened a new Inclusive Learning Hub for students with a diagnosis of Pathological Demand Avoidance at our school in Yorkshire, The Robert Ogden School
- received an outstanding care rating from Ofsted for three of our schools
- grew the numbers of students at our newest schools, Church Lawton School in Cheshire East, from 12 students in 2015 to 35 students currently and at Thames Valley School in Reading from 34 pupils in 2015 to 44 students
- supported 249 autistic adults in residential care and 120 adults in supported living services and delivered 163,000 hours of community support
- redesigned our new holiday facilities, to open in 2016-17, in Somerset
- appointed a new complex care development manager, who has completed an internal and external mapping exercise to make sure we can provide the complex care services and support that are most needed.

Next year we will:

- prepare for the opening of a new school in Lambeth and a new school and enterprise campus in Essex
- open further specialist centres to support pupils in mainstream schools
- make plans to improve the physical environments of some of our older and more established residential and day services
- begin the development a new resource centre in Belfast to give people in Northern Ireland access to an autism-specific day activity centre for the first time
- increase the capacity of some of our community services to provide care from 8am to 8pm
- enhance the skills of our staff and build relationships with commissioners in order to scale up our activity on complex care.

"Since starting at the Inclusion Unit in January, he has a much better outlook on life and every day is not the constant battle it was before. He gets up without a struggle and is quite happy to come to school, he is now a much happier person all round."

Parent of a student using our Inclusive Learning Hub

Being a partner for life to autistic people and families

Being diagnosed with autism, getting the right education for your child, entering adulthood, trying to get a job, dealing with problems with benefits... there are so many situations where autistic people and their families need expert information, advice and sometimes, just someone to listen. We aim to act as a trusted partner to autistic people, families and friends by passing on the knowledge we have gained through 50 years of practice, and learning from them too.

Expanding support for families

Most parents who have an autistic child start with very little information about autism or where to turn for support at the point of diagnosis. Our EarlyBird courses are designed to give parents the knowledge, confidence and local networks they need to get the best support for their child. Across the UK, 2,583 families attended an EarlyBird or associated course in 2015-16.

"This programme should be compulsory for all parents after receiving their diagnosis, it has changed our lives in so many different ways. Thank you!"

London parent

The EarlyBird courses are delivered by local authority professionals who have completed our specially-designed training programmes.

This year, 244 professionals were trained at our EarlyBird centre in Barnsley, with course attendees giving us consistently good feedback.

"This was one of the most useful, helpful and interesting courses I have done in 30 years of teaching."

Hertfordshire Outreach Teacher

As well as the original EarlyBird course, we also train professionals in EarlyBird Plus, for parents with children aged four to eight. We have also begun training professionals in our newest parent support programme, Healthy Minds, for children aged six to 11, which focuses on how parents can support children's emotional wellbeing and mental health.

As 71% of autistic children have mental health problems, such as anxiety disorders, depression, and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)[2], this course is desperately needed.

"Healthy Minds builds on the existing good practice of EarlyBird and is a much-needed programme for helping parents to help their individual children by reducing anxiety and building resilience."

Lincolnshire psychologist

[2] Simonoff E. et al (2008). Psychiatric disorders in children with autism spectrum disorders: prevalence, comorbidity, and associated factors in a population-derived sample, *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 47: 4: 921-929

Niall and his two-year-old son Max who was diagnosed as autistic last year.

Helping at times of transition

Moving from school to adult life is a point where autistic young people and their families need particular support. Change of any kind can be traumatic for autistic people of all ages and needs to be carefully managed. Our Transition Support Service provides advice to families of autistic young people making the transition from school to adult life or further education. Ensuring a positive transition is crucial as 70% of autistic adults say that they are not getting the help they need from social services.[3]

In 2015-16, our transitions service guided 137 families through the transition process by offering advice on rights and entitlements, exploring options, finding suitable provision and ensuring that each young person was engaged and meaningfully involved. We offered support to young people from Year 9 to prevent a crisis intervention in the last few months of education and ensure that young people and their families received a quality plan that had a positive impact on the young person's transition and future.

We also updated our digital information resources following the implementation of the *Care Act 2014* and the continuing roll out of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and these have collectively been viewed over 15,000 times.

"I was at a total loss with what was out there regarding transition and what support could be given to my son but my adviser was very helpful and I'm now more aware of services that could benefit my son and myself."

One hundred per cent of families would recommend and use our Transition Support Service again. Almost three quarters of families who used the service agreed that, following our support, they knew more about their child's entitlements regarding transition than they did before, felt more able to express their views and their child's views on the transition and felt more hopeful about their child's future.

"It helped the various authorities involved to realise that I did know what they were supposed to be doing and that I was not going to just back away."

We look forward to not only continuing but extending our transition support from a service available in the South East of England to young people and their families across the UK. We would like to thank John and Marianne Swannell and friends and City Bridge Trust for their ongoing support.

Expanding local support

Our 115 volunteer-run branches and groups provide tens of thousands of people with local information and peer support every year, as well as an opportunity to campaign and fundraise. This year we have seen our branches network grow with two new branches in Herefordshire

[3] Bancroft et al (2012). *The Way We Are: Autism In 2012*. London: The National Autistic Society

and North Northumberland and five new groups in Redruth, Nottinghamshire, Thurrock, Canterbury and Blackpool. We now have more local branches than ever before in our history.

Our branch volunteers tell us they have gained in confidence and feel less isolated as a result of being involved in local branch activities.

Our Wrexham Branch won 'Branch of the Year' in our staff and volunteer awards. The team of volunteers at Wrexham are led by Kerry and Kelly, who met at the school gates just over two years ago.

They said: "When we took over the branch there were a number of regular events, swimming, soft play – bowling and an adult social group. Funding came from one source and the branch had never really fundraised under its own name. We created a Wrexham National Autistic Society Facebook page and Twitter account so that we could start to engage people on social media. Now we've got nearly 900 likes on our Facebook page, amazing!

"As we chatted at our informal committee meetings (at one of our homes with a cuppa) we slowly started to see the potential of the branch and how we could help as many people living with autism as possible in Wrexham. We've introduced new events for families – Lego Club, mini golf, rock climbing, dance sessions, gymnastics class and also talks from autistic people. Of course all of these new classes needed additional funding. This year we held our Christmas Fair and we had a whole month of fundraising with The Healthy High Streets Campaign. Santander, The Cooperative, Boots and M&S helped us raise over £5,000 by doing various things, such as a sponsored jump out of a 100ft tree! We had lots of help from our members. They ran marathons, cut off their hair and had coffee mornings. Santander also gave us £1,200 through their community fund which has funded our swim sessions for a year. We also held our first ever Charity Ball in partnership with Santander and raised over £3,000.

"We also wanted to celebrate World Autism Awareness Week (WAAW) in style and we arranged a fun day in Wrexham town centre on 2 April. It was an AMAZING day – we had over 1,000 people attend!

"We organised a Question Time style event hustings for the Welsh Assembly elections which candidates from all six parties attended. We are also in consultation with Wrexham CAMHS. We are currently supporting them with the new Neurodevelopment Team that is being set-up as a new diagnosis pathway for autism and ADHD. We have provided feedback on the processes they will be using and are helping to design the forms that go along with that process."

A branch member said: "The volunteers who make up the committee of the Wrexham Branch do an excellent job of keeping us parents informed, especially via email and Facebook. The various activities cover all ages, from over-eights' Lego, to Blue Bears run around for the younger members and Splash Magic swimming for all ages. On their e-newsletter, they also point out where members can call for help and also give a big 'thank you' to all who have donated or fundraised to help towards the running or these activities. Everyone is recognised and thanked. Their support is overwhelming.

"They provide me and my son with monthly swim sessions. As it's a closed session he can scream and splash without the normal stares we get. They provide a lot of activities for many families which helps a lot of children to socialise. There's always a big smile after which is great."

We also:

- almost doubled the proportion of enquiries that we handle at first point of contact via our Helpline to 38% at the end of March 2016 compared with 20% at the end of 2014-15
- increased our membership to 20,644 people
- began offering the Brain in Hand service to students who need occasional support while studying at university or college
- carried out specialist diagnostic assessments for 101 people in 2015-16 at our Lorna Wing Centre
- began an evaluation of our innovative brokerage project to help inform the wider social care sector about how to support autistic people to get the best value from direct payments and personal budgets.

Next year we will:

- launch a new training programme for parents of teenagers: TeenLife
- release a new online training module, *Managing money*, to help autistic people and their families
- increase the number of specialist diagnostic assessments we deliver
- increase the reach of our website and social media channels so that more autistic people and families get accurate information.

We look forward to extending our transition support UK-wide to help young people like Claire.

Sharing practice with professionals

We want to extend the knowledge we have built up over 50 years to help professionals working in public services to improve their understanding of autism. Every year, we help thousands of professionals to improve their autism practice, including education, health, social care and criminal justice professionals as well as employers and employability specialists.

Bringing teachers into *MyWorld*

Most autistic children attend mainstream schools.[4] We want all teachers to have access to the tools and resources they need to provide the best possible care and education to autistic pupils.

However, when we surveyed teachers in 2014, 83% told us they didn't get enough training on autism. Thanks to sponsorship from Axcis Education, we have been able to develop a solution. *MyWorld*, a fortnightly email resource, now brings autism information directly to teachers' inboxes to help them better support autistic pupils. More than 12,500 teachers have subscribed to the service since we launched in April 2015. This represents one in 34 of the teaching profession across the UK, a remarkable result in one year.

MyWorld is designed to celebrate the talents and potential of autistic children and to leave teachers feeling engaged enough to want to sign up for the schools' resources. To encourage teachers to sign up, our activity included films made with autistic students in four schools, which have been viewed by more than 8,000 people; content provided by education professionals across the country; a free resource pack for everyone who signed up; and a teachers' week on social media.

We asked teachers to rate their understanding of autism before they signed up and after six months. Only 9% rated their knowledge as 9/10 or 10/10 before, while after 53% rated it as 9 or 10. This change will have a lasting impact on the education of tens of thousands of autistic children.

"It is very, very useful to be prompted every couple of weeks to think about certain topics and follow up on the information, whether they are new or familiar areas of experience."

"Thank you for this brilliant resource. As a mum and a professional who works with young people on the spectrum, I know the difference it makes when teachers and staff understand the needs of their autistic students."

[4] Department for Education (January 2014). *DfE Special educational needs in England: January 2014*

Christopher, who starred in Channel 4's *Educating the East End*, was the face of our *MyWorld* campaign for teachers.

We helped Feltham Young Offenders' Institute to improve the way they support autistic offenders in custody.

Improving autism practice in prisons

Research has found that autistic people "represent some of the most vulnerable people in the offender population."[5] To try and improve the support for autistic people in the criminal justice system, we have been developing our Autism Accreditation scheme for criminal justice settings. Feltham become the first prison or young offender institution in the country to be awarded Autism Accreditation in February 2016. We have worked with Feltham for nearly two years to improve the way they support autistic offenders in custody.

Our Accreditation scheme aims to improve autism practice across every area of prison life, such as admission, staff training, behaviour management and the physical environment, with the long-term aim of tackling issues often faced by autistic prisoners and ultimately lowering reoffending rates.

Working with Feltham, we found that relatively simple changes could make a big difference, including familiarising staff with autism, allowing an autistic prisoner to use communal areas at quieter times or making reasonable adjustments to the building, such as creating areas with minimal stimuli by reducing posters and notices.

We're now hoping to roll out the scheme more widely and work with other prisons and young offender institutions to improve their autism practice. Almost 30 prisons have expressed interest in becoming accredited.

"Staff previously may have been aware of a prisoner being autistic, but wouldn't really have known what that meant or how it might impact on the prisoner. Now they do. Now they know that they might need to change the way that they approach or communicate with the person. They know the strategies to put in place or where to go to ask for help."

Mo Foster, Head of Young People and Services at HMYOI Feltham

"Prisoners on the autism spectrum have specific needs and, in many cases, small adjustments to the regime and the estate can tackle those problems, giving them a better chance to engage in rehabilitation. I am delighted that numerous other prisons are expressing interest in NAS Accreditation."

Prisons Minister Andrew Selous

We also:

- increased health, social care and education professionals' knowledge of autism through training 7,906 professionals, providing conferences to 2,814 and increasing the membership of Network Autism, our online resource for professionals, by 1,351 people to over 8,000 professionals
- expanded our Autism Accreditation scheme to 504 services nationally and internationally
- secured eight partnerships with employers or supported employment organisations to help autistic people into work.

Next year we will:

- grow the number of professionals trained or accessing our resources to 20,440.
- welcome a further 7,000 education professionals to our *MyWorld* programme
- expand our Accreditation scheme so that we can spread good autism practice to more care, health, education and criminal justice services
- increase our international consultancy work
- work with even more employers, as part of our new *Too Much Information* campaign will focus on understanding autism in the workplace.

[5] Talbot, J (2008). No one knows: *Prisoners Voices: Experiences of the criminal justice system by prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties.* London: Prison Reform Trust

Educating wider society

The public, government and businesses have a huge impact on the lives of autistic people and their families. We aim to educate national and local policy-makers, the public and businesses about autism to create better policy and public spaces for autistic people.

Creating better public understanding

When we ask autistic people and family members about what needs to change, improving public understanding of autism is always near the top of the list.

We knew we needed to launch a major new initiative to tackle this issue. But first, we wanted an in-depth understanding of exactly what autistic people and families wanted people to know, as well as the kinds of messages that would really influence the attitudes and behaviour of members of the public. Previous autism awareness campaigns have focused on just that: increasing the public's awareness of the term 'autism'. With 99% of the public having heard of the term autism, we wanted to go a step further and make sure that the public really understood how autism can affect someone's behaviour and what they can do to help.

Raising awareness at Queen's Park Rangers

In 2015-16, we conducted a series of focus groups and interviews with autistic people and their families, including people connected with our charity and the wider autistic population. This research was backed up by the largest ever UK survey about public understanding of autism, from which we got over 7,000 responses from autistic people, families and professionals – the insights we needed to inform what would become our *Too Much Information* campaign.

We learned that these groups did not expect nor want the public to have a thorough understanding of autism. They just wanted the public to recognise that autistic people may find public situations overwhelming, which can lead to particular behaviours, and for people to know how to respond in a more helpful way. We also learned that families were avoiding public situations, with half sometimes or often not leaving the house due to a fear of poor public reactions. Seventy-nine per cent of autistic adults told us they feel socially isolated, which can lead to both physical and mental health problems.[6]

"Your world becomes a lot smaller."

Mother of an autistic child

"I feel like a goldfish trapped in a bowl by an invisible wall of glass – looking out into a world I try so hard to join."

Autistic person

"Our son Bowie suffered badly from social anxiety. In public he would hit, punch, bite, kick, and scream when he couldn't cope. This mostly happened on public transport… I would be told my child is 'naughty', and that 'he needs a good slap'."

Fay, mother of Bowie and parent campaigner/activist

Focus groups with the public showed us that when the public recognise that autism might be influencing someone's behaviour in a given situation, their initial judgemental reaction switched to empathy and a desire to be helpful. We concluded that if we could educate them about autism in a way that felt supportive rather than accusatory, we could change the experiences of autistic people for the better.

[6] Campaign to end loneliness (2010) Available at: http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health (Accessed: 1 June 2016)

Based on this research, we developed a series of resources to launch in April 2016, including a new programme of Understanding autism talks for volunteers to deliver, new digital resources and a partnership with *The Guardian*. At the heart of *Too Much Information* though was an innovative film shot from a child's perspective and featuring autistic actor Alex.

"When I was making the film for The National Autistic Society, physically, I felt a bit tired, but it was awesome. It was like winning the lottery twenty gazillion times. Since my diagnosis a lot more people understand. It really helps when they understand as they can help with things I have trouble coping with. I really hope that the campaign will help lots of people who don't know about autism to understand and respect and be a little more careful. That little bit will make the difference to everyone."

Alex, 10

Tackling diagnosis waiting times

Long waiting times for autism diagnosis continue to push people to crisis point.

Children on average wait 3.5 years to receive a diagnosis, whereas adults wait 2.5 years. In August 2015 we launched a campaign to help end the wait.

Support was overwhelming. Nearly 12,000 people signed our open letter to the NHS in England and Government. We gained significant support in Parliament with 1,500 people raising the issue with their MPs, prompting the autism diagnosis crisis to be discussed on the floor of the House of Commons. Our campaigners gathered outside Parliament, which encouraged over 500 people to respond to the government consultation on NHS priorities.

"I don't want anyone else to have to go through the years of uncertainty and helplessness that we experienced. I hope our presence in front of Parliament today will make the Government realise how delayed diagnosis can damage lives.

"It makes me sad to think how different our lives could have been if Sam had been diagnosed when he was younger. Without an understanding of his needs, we just didn't know how to support him, how to help him cope with the world."

Mel, whose son Sam waited an appalling nine years for his autism diagnosis

As a result, the Department of Health and NHS England promised to start measuring the number of people diagnosed with autism in every area of England and reporting on this publicly. They also started visits to areas with good practice and poor practice in diagnostic practice so that the whole NHS and social care can learn what works.

This is a game-changing development. The data can play a vital role in getting waiting times down. It will also show how many autistic people there are in a given area, so policy-makers and budget holders can then plan for post-diagnostic services and local people can hold decision-makers to account if services aren't meeting the level of need.

The Government also included reducing the health inequalities faced by autistic people in its 'mandate' to NHS England. This means it's now a central aim of the NHS in England to make sure autistic people can access health services, including diagnosis.

We are now working with NHS England to make sure that data collection works and that local people have access to the data.

Of course we want to get the same result in other nations. Diagnosis has been a key focus of our engagement with candidates in elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, our volunteers and supporters contacted more than 200 MSP candidates, with coffee mornings taking place across the nation, including with Kezia Dugdale, the leader of the Scottish Labour Party. Together with our Young Campaigners' Group we held a national Question Time event in Glasgow, attended by four candidates, including Jamie Hepburn, the current Minister with responsibility for autism.

Meanwhile, we built momentum for an Autism Act for Wales. We met with all parties, including more than 90 candidates, to talk about autism issues local to their constituencies and the need for an Autism Act. All but one of the six main parties in Wales made a commitment to an Autism Act in their manifestos, an astonishing achievement.

Volunteers from our branches in Wales met candidates face to face and organised Question Time events from Pembrokeshire to Ebbw Vale. Autism issues were part of live radio election debates and even came up during the Leaders' debate, showing the influence of our members' campaigning.

Similarly, in Northern Ireland, we held coffee morning discussions with candidates as well as Question Time events. In Belfast, our charity held a joint Question Time event with Autism NI, hosted by BBC journalist Tara Mills. We had representation from the DUP, UUP, SDLP, Sinn Fein, Alliance, Green Party and PUP as well as an excellent turnout from autistic adults and parents.

Families showed just how long they had to wait for an autism diagnosis when we took our fight for shorter waiting times to Parliament.

Alex, 10, starred in our *Too Much Information* film which showed how sensory overload feels.

We also:

- advised the DWP on the design of new policy on disability employment and worked with NHS England on making the Transforming Care programme as effective as possible for autistic people currently living in inpatient units
- wrote new good practice guides with support from the Department of Health for local authorities and the NHS about how to implement the new statutory guidance on autism
- continued our role in the Care and Support Alliance and helped secure a new mechanism for councils to increase local spending on social care. While more funding is still desperately needed, this is a welcome first step.
- evaluated our community organising approach and supported local volunteers to campaign for better series in West Berkshire and Cumbria
- remodelled our Access Award to involve more volunteers and renamed it the Autism Friendly Award – we decided to delay relaunching it until summer 2016 to fit with our *Too Much Information* programme
- supported autism-friendly performances in theatres, allowing thousands of autistic people and families to access shows like *The Lion King*, which would otherwise feel impossible
- worked with scriptwriters on the ground-breaking series *The A Word*, helping to make sure the BBC drama reached millions of people with a more accurate message about autism.

Next year we will:

- roll out the *Too Much Information* campaign, educating millions of people about how to respond with empathy and not judgement to autistic people when out in public
- work with drama and documentary producers to get more accurate portrayals of autism into the media
- expand autism-friendly performances and the Autism Friendly Award to more locations in the UK
- support local volunteers to campaign for more autism services
- continue to push autism to be included in initial teacher training and for diagnosis waiting times to be included in NHS monitoring frameworks
- advocate for autism data to be included in DWP programmes
- develop new policy and public affairs strategies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland after the May 2016 elections.

Improving autism expertise and support services

All our activities require our staff and volunteers to have the best possible knowledge of autism and autism practice. We have developed our new Academy over the last year. This new programme will support staff to achieve and maintain an excellent knowledge and understanding of autism and translate this knowledge into their everyday practice.

Increasing our autism expertise

We have created a new organisational structure to support the delivery of the programmes within the Academy. Eight new Autism Practice Facilitators are now in place to facilitate the support of staff working in education and care services on their journey from induction to becoming experienced autism practitioners. The Facilitators are responsible for working alongside existing teams to ensure that autism aspects of all training are appropriate, evidence-based and up-to-date.

Individual enrolment and evaluation systems are in place to document progress, developments and achievements. There are three elements to the programme: the induction framework, an accredited modular learning programme and reflective supervision.

After an official launch in September 2016, all new staff will automatically enrol on the Academy programme and will complete the induction framework in their first year, receiving a Continuous Professional Development portfolio, reflective journal and automatic access to various learning opportunities.

The autism knowledge and expertise of existing staff will be cross referenced allowing them enrolment on to the Academy as appropriate.

We are working collaboratively with Edge Hill University to develop an accredited modular learning programme that will build on the first year, supporting staff to gain a deeper understanding of the autism spectrum and to embed the theoretical autism knowledge into their everyday practice. This will be recorded and validated and there is the potential for staff to gain university credits.

We have developed a bespoke model of reflective supervision to make sure that reflection is underpinned by our charity's values and the principles of the existing SPELL (Structure, Positive, Empathy, Low Arousal, Links) framework.

More than 90 staff members have received training in the reflective supervision model and the Autism Practice Facilitators and Staff Development Coordinators are working together to roll out this supervision process within all schools and services. All staff will have undertaken three pieces of reflective supervision by the end of 2016.

Evaluating our impact

This year we took further strides in understanding the outcomes achieved by our individual services and the impact of our charity as a whole.

In education we partnered with the Institute of Education's Centre for Research in Autism on a study funded by the Department for Education on school exclusions, focusing on our hubs at The Robert Ogden School. We also put in place an evaluation plan for the Cullum Centres which will run for at least four years and provide lessons on helping young people thrive in mainstream settings.

In our adult services we revamped our impact reporting to ensure that we are focusing on what matters to autistic people, families and commissioners: safety, steps towards independence and quality of life. Measuring autistic people's quality of life presents a number of challenges but we are making good progress in developing suitable measures.

Our advice and support services for young people, adults and families continue to achieve high levels of impact evidence by our surveys and individual evaluations.

We completely overhauled our overall Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – the measures we use to monitor and evaluate ourselves – to put much more focus on outcomes, both for the people we support directly and the UK's 700,000 autistic people, and on our role in generating knowledge of good practice.

We also:

- undertook evaluations of our Brain in Hand support for autistic students
- worked on research studies with the Institute of Psychiatry, York University Social Policy Research Unit, The Personal and Social Services Research Unit and Newcastle University
- partnered on an Economic and Social Research Council seminar series on shaping autism research in the UK
- signed up to New Philanthropy Capital's Inspiring Impact programme as an Impact Champion, and pledged to promote evaluation across the autism sector.

Next year we will:

- begin enrolling staff on to our new Academy
- roll out a new outcomes measurement system for our schools and services, co-designed with autistic people and family members.

The Academy

Continuing **Professional Development** portfolio

Maximising efficiency behind the scenes

From offering more volunteering opportunities to making our website mobile-friendly, we've done many things to make The National Autistic Society more efficient this year.

Offering more volunteering opportunities

Volunteers are crucial to our charity's future and already help to deliver many of our core activities, from our branch network to our Helpline. We now have a growing number of volunteers, over 2,000, many in completely new roles.

We have worked hard to embed volunteers more into our Helpline, with a new investment in volunteer recruitment, training and development. The introduction of more volunteer roles has helped the team to increase the number of calls we take by 300 every month and at the same time we've maintained a 99% callers' satisfaction rate.

Volunteers are taking on new roles in other functions. A new digital support volunteer has updated 50 branch websites to make them mobile-friendly. At our Lorna Wing diagnostic centre, volunteers play and chat with children going through a diagnostic assessment while clinicians meet with their parents separately. This allows the parents and children to have a much better experience during the assessment.

A huge thank you to all our volunteers!

"Having been warmly welcomed into the organisation, I have since completed a number of training programmes which continue to benefit me in my chosen role as an agent on the newly launched 'Helplive' service [now called Live Chat].

"I have been offered continued support from the Helpline managers and always feel valued and appreciated. It is a pleasure to be able to contribute in some small way to such a worthwhile cause and I thank The National Autistic Society for giving me the opportunity to do so."

Sumayyah Scott, volunteer

May Gray is our Volunteer of the Year

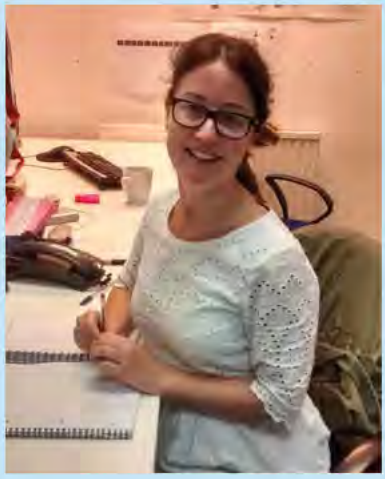
May has volunteered with us for two years and has shown enthusiasm and commitment for so many activities. She started volunteering within the person-to-person service, welcoming new adults who want to socialise and helping people to meet up outside the coffee club. She has gone on to research new venues (checking that they are autism-friendly), mentoring through the person-to-person service, volunteering at two relaxed performances, doing media interviews and doing bucket collections to fundraise. We would like to thank May for everything she has done to improve the lives of autistic people.

The Education Rights and Lifelong Learning service is our Team of the Year

The team provides advice to thousands of families across the UK every year to help them get the best possible education. The team has formed an alliance with law firms which gets £750,000 worth of free legal advice for these families and has made volunteers core to the way the service runs. They have also made sure that staff and volunteers are kept up to date on new legislation and share this knowledge with our charity's staff and our volunteer-run branches.

The judges were impressed with the high satisfaction ratings from people using the service and the very positive feedback from volunteers, who on average stay seven years in their roles.

Internal Communications Manager, Rhiannon Edwards, is our Employee of the Year



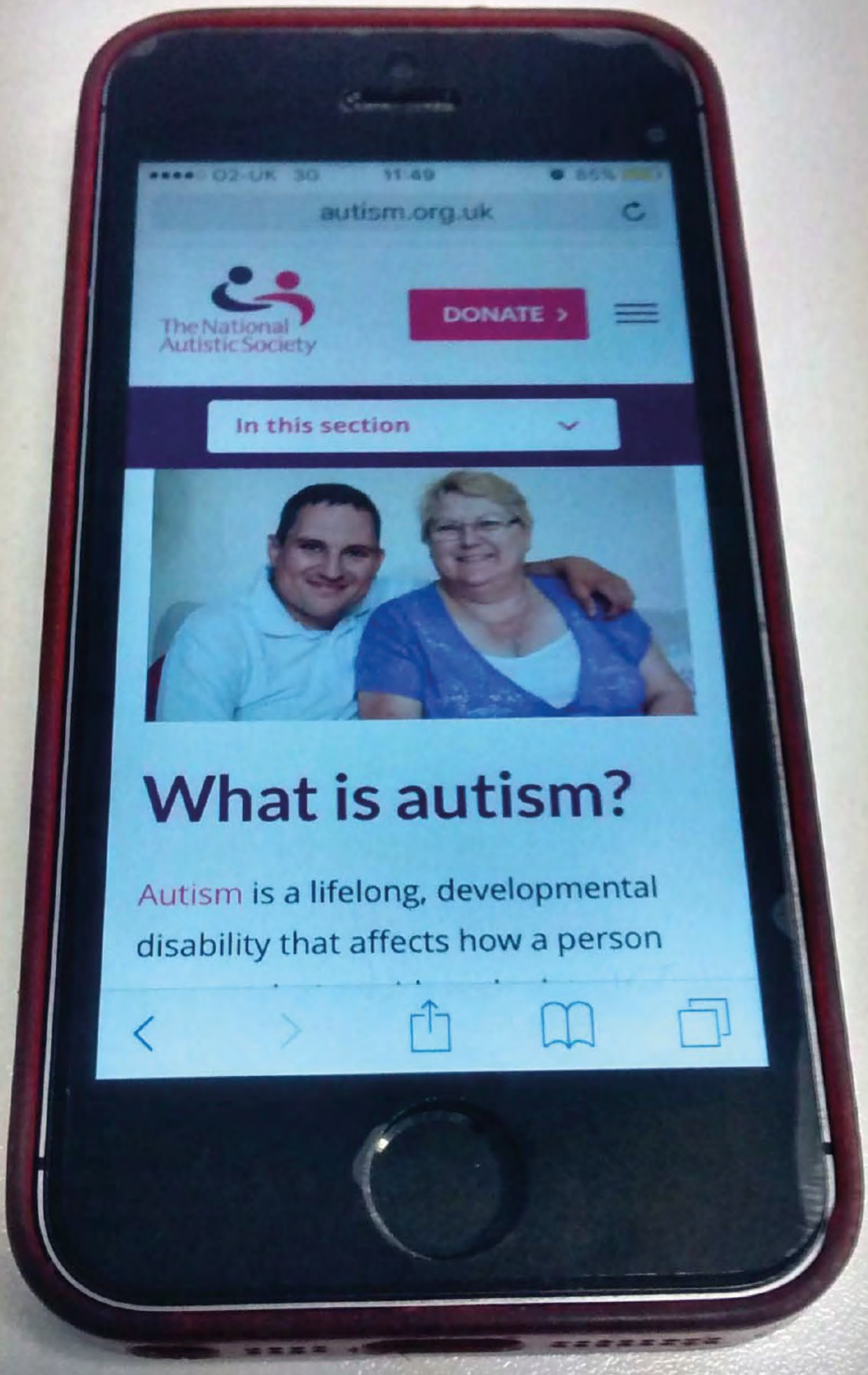
This year Rhiannon led the organisation's first big staff survey. She showed enormous determination and commitment throughout this project, phoning managers across the UK individually to make sure they had the information they needed and planning every part of the project rigorously, from designing the survey to getting the results out within days of it finishing.

The judges were impressed with Rhiannon's commitment, the response rate she achieved and her rigorous approach to this new initiative for our charity.

Pauline Collins of our Ty Coed service is our Manager of the Year

Pauline played a leading role in starting a new residential service. She showed enormous passion and commitment in making sure that an individual there with complex needs was able to transition to the service from a Treatment and Assessment Unit, helping her gain independence. The person's parents expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Pauline.

The judges were impressed with Pauline's commitment and her desire to create a new, innovative service.



In December 2015 we launched the latest, mobile-friendly, version of our website.

Launching a mobile-friendly website

In December 2015 we launched the latest, mobile-friendly, version of our website. With over 54% of visitors now using mobile devices to access the site, we responded by simplifying the design and the navigation to create a better experience. Our policy of involving autistic people in the design process led to a very favourable response to the new design and an increase in visitor numbers, reaching 506,000 for the month of March 2016.

"This is so much more user-friendly! Clearer headings, easier to read, less going on and way more autism-friendly! Love it!"

Website user

"Looks great, so much better!"

Website user

Our online community continued to offer autistic adults and parents of autistic children an online space to discuss concerns and advice seek from peers in an anonymous and safe environment. Its popularity grows steadily – this year receiving 224,000 visits, an increase of 51,000 on the previous year.

Our strategy of engagement using social media continues to pay off and is reflected in the growth in followers of our channels and their levels of participation. Twitter and Facebook, our top channels, gained 30,967 followers and 97,843 likes respectively over the year. Some of our best performing posts have reached 1.5 million people!

We also:

- put in place a new self-service HR system to improve our efficiency
- piloted a new telephony system
- appointed an IT Director and began development of a new IT strategy.

Next year we will:

- invest further in volunteer recruitment and training to improve the experience of people using our Helpline and continue to improve the number of enquiries we handle at the first point of contact
- develop a new way for our volunteers, supporters and staff to network and share resources at a local level
- upgrade our website platform to give users a better experience
- further improve our recruitment and retention systems so that we maintain consistent and good quality staffing in our education and care services
- change our ways of communicating internally so we continually improve our staff engagement levels
- deploy new systems in care services to reduce paper processes and allow more focus on care
- continue to invest in our data technologies to make sure we are anticipating and meeting the information needs of our different audiences.

Raising more funds

World Autism Awareness Week (WAAW) is our biggest opportunity each year for our supporters to fundraise and show their support for our work. In 2015, we built on the resounding success of Onesie Wednesday™, which took place on World Autism Awareness Day in 2014. The aim was to create a week-long campaign for everyone to take part in fundraising activities to raise money and awareness about autism in their community.

Standing out for autism

The primary theme was "Stand out for autism". This encouraged people to raise awareness about autism as they fundraised. Two characters created by Martyn B Lorbiecki, an autistic artist, also featured throughout and represented the campaign.

Thanks to our supporters, we smashed our original fundraising target of £100,000 to raise £235,395. A moving poem by Jill Finch about her daughter Beatrix's autism raised more than £14,000 alone. Nearly 250 people took part in our inaugural Night Walks, raising more than £61,000. Our supporters took to social media to publicise their efforts and our Facebook posts had a combined reach of over four million people. Our WAAW web pages were visited more than 25,000 times.

"I stand quietly at the supermarket checkout while everyone stares at you barking like a dog and blowing raspberries on my arms to cope with the buzzing lights.

"I stand quietly while you tell the baffled shop owner that you are looking for shoes that feel hard like splintered wood because your skin can't bear soft things.

"I stand quietly when the attendant gives us scornful looks when I ask for the key to the disabled toilet because the hand dryer noise is too overwhelming for you."

Extract from *I stand quietly* by Jill Finch, read more at: https://istandquietly.wordpress.com/

"Whether you are big or small, you can always achieve great things."

Daniel, 10

Daniel, who is on the autism spectrum and raised over £1,100 during WAAW 2015. He also gave talks to schools to improve understanding.

WAAW was shortlisted for the best fundraising campaign at the Third Sector Awards 2015.

Increasing and appreciating our donors and supporters

We met a huge milestone for individual giving in 2015-16 – we now have over 10,000 supporters giving regularly to our charity. This regular support is helping us to deliver many services and activities that otherwise would not be possible and we would like to thank every single one of these people for the support they are giving us and autistic people and their families.

For one day each year, our staff take time to contact our supporters to thank them for the help they give us. Staff came together on Friday 8 January and sent almost 3,000 postcards and 50,000 emails to our supporters. Many staff also spent time calling donors, fundraisers and volunteers to say thank you and update them on our plans for this year.

One key element in our success has been integrating our fundraising work with other teams so that we offer a range of different supporters the opportunity to financially support the organisation. Through various channels, primarily telephone, we have contacted people who have shown an interest in us and autism by campaigning or taking part in an event and asked them to support us financially. An amazing number have become regular financial supporters and continue to support our work.

We also launched a new giving platform – Together Gifts – an innovative platform that allows friends and families to get together and create a joint gift to show their support for their loved ones as well as our charity. It allows people to share their own stories in their own words and really make a difference.

We also:

- continued to build strong corporate partnerships, including with Axcis Recruitment and MoneySuperMarket, our two largest partnerships in the year
- benefited once again from the commitment and generosity of The Anderson Foundation, with whom we will open a brand new, purpose-built school and enterprise campus in Essex in 2017
- had a strong year in legacy giving, thanks to kind supporters who considered our charity in their wills.

Next year we will:

- seek to build on the great initial success of our *Too Much Information* campaign, in particular by partnering with more companies to make sure they are autism-friendly in terms of their customers, employees and in their support of our activities
- continue to build strong partnerships with other charities and agencies to make sure that our unrivalled autism expertise is incorporated within programmes of work that will benefit autistic people and their families
- launch major fundraising initiatives towards capital and revenue commitment in establishing our school and enterprise hub in Essex, a new community resource centre in Northern Ireland and a major capital makeover of our 'outstanding' Radlett Lodge School.

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:

Alinea Consulting
Anderson Foundation
Artizian
Lord and Lady Astor of Hever
Axcis Education Recruitment
The Bank Workers Charity
Colin Barrow, CBE
The Bet365 Foundation
Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust
Clarks
Clifford Chance LLP
The Cullum Family Trust
Jim and (late) Becky Daley
Colin and Helen David
Consort Medical plc
The Disney Theatrical Group
Donald Forrester Trust
Roger and Kate Emerson
Exchange Chambers
Fujitsu
Gerald Micklem Charitable Trust
Harper Mcleod LLP
Heathrow Community Fund
HelmsBriscoe
James Hoare
Hugh Fraser Foundation
Industrial Agents Society
Inspire, Motivate and Engage
John Horniman's Children's Trust
Sir Frank and Lady Lowe
Martin and Karen Lynch
Charles and Alison McGregor
Richard and Philippa Mintz
MoneySupermarket
more2
The Oliver Ford Foundation
The Peter Harrison Foundation
PF Charitable Trust
Royal Astronomical Society
Sainsbury's Central Retail
SEGRO plc
John and Marianne Swannell
The AMW Charitable Trust
The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund
The Bamford Charitable Foundation
The City Bridge Trust
The Clare Milne Trust
The Coral Samuel Charitable Trust
The Croydon Relief in Need Charity
The David and Claudia Harding Foundation
The Edith Lilian Harrison 2000 Foundation
The Evan Cornish Foundation
The Gannochy Trust
The Golden Bottle Trust
The Henry Denman and Agneta Mary Cook Charity
The John Ellerman Foundation
The Liz and Terry Bramall Charitable Trust
The Morton Charitable Trust
The Norton Rose Charitable Foundation
The Progress Foundation
Toys R Us
Viking Cruises
The Inge Wakehurst Charitable Trust
Charlotte Warner and Bruno Paulson
Wilmington Trust

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

There were also a number of individual and corporate 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 (Wales)	£9,971 for an out of school club in Chepstow, Wales
Big Lottery Fund – Life Transitions	£126,330 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 and Places	£37,535 to expand our network of branches from 13 to 17 and enhance the support offered by the existing branches
Department for Education	£650,000 towards the Autism Education Trust (AET). The National Autistic Society manages the AET on behalf of a coalition of autism partners
Department for Education	£160,312 for our Exclusions service
Department of Health	£189,364 towards the National Brokerage Project
Department of Health	£30,648 from the Health and Care Voluntary Sector Strategic Partner Programme
Department of Health	£9,967 to produce guidance and online support to commissioners around the implementation of the Autism Act
Scottish Government – Autism Development Fund	£10,889 Coffee Clubs (for work delivered across 15/16 and 16/17)
Scottish Government – Autism Development Fund	£19,666 NAS Connect (for work delivered across 15/16 and 16/17)
Scottish Government – Third Sector Early Intervention Fund	£36,846 for our Young Campaigners project in Scotland
Welsh Government	£48,735 for NAS Cymru's core work to support autistic people in Wales

David, 16, from Cornwall who featured in *Your Autism* magazine for our members in 2015. He wants to be a blogger or games designer when he's older.

Strategic report

Part 2: Financial Review

Overview

The NAS Group in year results were positive with net incoming resources of £1.3m. The decrease on last year's figure of £3m is due to an expected reduction in capital grant income from the Education Funding Agency for the NAS Academies Trust.

General reserves are slightly lower at £6.9m and funds designated by the Trustees for items including the support of the delivery of our strategy have increased from £2.5m to £3m.

The Trustees are confident that these results ensure that The National Autistic Society can continue to be able to provide much needed support to our beneficiaries.

Financial highlights

NAS Group

Total income was £98.7m, an increase of £2.9m on last year. Expenditure has increased by £4.5m to £97.3m. Overall income increased despite the reduction in capital grant income in relation to the NAS Academies Trust due to increased activity in our schools and services and the sale of two properties.

- Fee income continues to be derived mainly from statutory bodies in relation to the delivery of services and increased slightly to 84% of our total income with the increased number of students being supported by the two free schools under the NAS Academies Trust.
- Unrestricted donations and legacies increased by £1.3m to £5.7m with increases in individual giving and event income. Restricted voluntary income dropped slightly by £0.2m as the number of funded projects decreased.
- Overall, income from donations and gifts rose by £1.3m to £6.3m, while income from grants (excluding NAS Academies Trust) reduced to £2.4m (2014/15: £2.7m) and legacy income increased slightly to £0.3m (2014/15: £0.2m).
- We continued our investment in attracting new regular givers to the charity, spending £438k of direct expenditure in the year. At the end of the financial year, the number of regular givers by direct debit had risen to 10,826. Since we commenced this programme of investment in 2011-12, the charity's gross annual income from individual giving has grown by almost £1m to £1,388k in 2015-16. This gross figure is set to exceed £2m by 2018-19.
- We also made an investment of £91k in growing the size of the team participating in running events and fundraising on behalf of our charity, in particular in the Virgin London Marathon. This has resulted in the highest ever number of applicants by far for our gold bond places, the largest ever team running for our charity and significantly higher average fundraising per runner.
- Income from other trading activities remained stable at £0.4m.
- Cash reduced to £13.1m (2014/15: £13.6m) due to longer payment negotiations on contracted services, an investment in fixed assets and our donor acquisition strategy but still remains within expected levels.
- Investment income remains relatively low at £0.1m due to low interest rates.
- Expenditure on charitable activities increased to £94.4m (2014/15: £89.4m) with increased activity in our schools and adult services including an increase of £1.3m in NAS Academies Trust to £2.6m.
- Despite continued investment in our donor acquisition strategy fundraising costs reduced slightly to £2.9m from £3m last year.

- Staff costs accounted for 70% of our overall costs, a slight reduction on 71% last year.
- We purchased fixed assets valued at £1.3m in the year. This compares to £4.3m in the prior year which included £3.3m to complete the construction of our two free schools.
- Designated funds have increased to £3m from £2.4m last year to enable the continued investment in donor acquisition and to support the development of our schools and services.
- The value of our LGPS pension deficit has decreased in year from £16.7m to £14.3m.

NAS Services Ltd

NAS Services Ltd is the trading arm of The National Autistic Society through which it delivers the majority of its welfare and education services. It is funded through fee income received from providing statutory services to autistic individuals.

- Turnover decreased from £78.8m to £65.6m as the delivery of support directly funded by individuals transferred to the charity. There was also a review of contracting arrangements with a small number of funding authorities resulting in a further transfer of service delivery to the charity.
- £59.6m was spent supporting autistic children and adults in our schools and services. This reduction on the £71.1m spent last year reflects the review of contracting arrangements.

Autism UK Ltd

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

- Turnover decreased from £397k in 2014/15 to £341k this year mainly due to income of £42k from royalties relating to Christmas cards resulting in a restatement of last year's income.
- Costs have reduced by £10k to £97k as a result of reductions in printing, mailing and warehousing costs.

NAS Academies Trust

The NAS Academies Trust operates our two existing free schools and continues to work with the Department of Education in the delivery of a third school to be based in Lambeth. It has two main sources of income – grants received from the Education Funding Agency and contracted fees from local authorities.

- Grant income received from the EFA reduced from £3.9m to £1.2m due to the completion in 2014-15 of the bulk of construction works on Church Lawton School in Cheshire which moved to its permanent site in April 2015.
- Contracted income increased to £2.1m from £0.7m as the number of pupils grew in the year from 36 to 80 as at the end of March 2016.
- Expenditure increased from £1.3m to £2.6m due to the increase in pupil numbers.

Pay policy

Pay is set based at the point of appointment based on a job evaluation, comparable market benchmark and the charity's financial perimeters. We are a market median payer which means when compared to similar roles in the market, we pay key management staff at the middle band level.

Following on from appointments, any increase in remuneration is considered based on the following context:

- performance and contribution measured against business priorities
- contractual and statutory obligations (eg teachers' terms/equal pay)
- comparable market benchmark
- alignment with the charity's pay mechanism and cycle
- alignment with the charity's pay priorities at the given time
- affordability within the charity's financial perimeters.

All awards are recommended by the line manager and approved by a director.

For directors, pay recommendations are made by the CEO and approved by the Chair.

For the CEO, pay awards must be signed off by the Chair of Trustees and Chair of Plans and Resources.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees fully recognised 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) facing the charity. This committee involves Trustees, the Chief Executive and other senior managers including the Internal Auditor.

In addition, the other main committees – Plans and Resources, Services Quality and Development, Education Quality and Development and Brand and Commercial Development – are charged with monitoring and reviewing the risks associated with their areas of responsibility.

During the year the Audit and Risk 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 are in place and under regular review in order to manage those risks.

The Society has identified the following major risks:

- Financial: maintain income. The Board continues to support the current five-year business plan for the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 and the approved budget for the 2016-17 financial year has been prepared in line with the agreed business plan assumptions. Regular reviews of progress against the business plan are undertaken by senior management and overseen by the Trustees.
- Operational: ensure the provision of high levels of safeguarding for the vulnerable young people and adults we work with. Our Services Quality and Development and Education Quality and Development Committees, 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 work closely with stakeholders including autistic people who receive our services as well as those who fund these services to ensure that our activities are structured accordingly.

The Trustees have considered whether there are any factors likely to affect the financial performance or position of the charity going forward and have identified that we, along with many other charities, must analyse the impact of the increase in the national living wage. The Trustees are working with the Executive on several work streams to identify efficiencies and growth opportunities to ensure the continued financial viability of our charity. 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 financial performance of the Society throughout the year as well as an annual review as part of the strategic planning process. With general funds (risk reserve) slightly lower at £6.9m the charity is still in line with the minimum risk reserve requirement set out in its Reserves policy.

The general reserves figure of £6.9m is regarded as being the charity's level of free reserves. In calculating the balance the figure does not include any fixed assets or designated funds held. As explained further below, the balance also does not include the Charity's LGPS pension liability as determined under FRS102 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 over a long period of time in place.

In determining the requirement for a minimum risk reserve level of £7m the Trustees considered the following:

- the impact of significantly reduced income across schools and services requiring a commercial business review of operations and / or a significant change to service provision
- the impact on the charity's ability to deliver its charitable activities of 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 £1m. Note 18 to the accounts details the amount of the fund and Note 24 provides additional information.

Going concern

The Trustees consider that the current target remains appropriate and realistic and take the view that the level of risk reserve held is acceptable given the current economic climate in which the charity operates. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As shown in our accounts, our cash position continues to demonstrate that we are able to fund our revenue expenditure including the annual 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.

Reserves held @ 31 March

	2015 £000	2014 £000
Free reserves	**6,895**	**7,348**
General funds – designated	**3,090**	**2,454**
Restricted reserves	**3,788**	**3,862**
Designated funds – fixed assets	**26,512**	**26,363**
NAS Academies Trust reserves	**8,526**	**7,825**

Becky, who lives at one of our residential services in the South West.

Pensions and FRS102

When reviewing the charity's risks and appropriate level of reserves required, the Trustees also take into consideration the impact of its pension liability as determined under FRS102.

We include within our accounts the actuarial valuation of our three Local Government Pension Schemes. This year, our liability has decreased by £2.4m to £14.3m. This contrasts with an increase last year of £3.2m and a decrease of £2.9m in 2013/14. These movements demonstrate the volatility of this liability which is largely due to the changing conditions in the financial markets and inflation assumptions which are outside our control. It is expected that the revised basis for valuation brought in under FRS102 will minimise fluctuations in the actuarial valuations.

Note 24 to the accounts details the impact of the FRS102 pension adjustments to our charity's 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, shared, property or any other investment product. As per the amended policy agreed in 2012/13 the Trustees have agreed that £4m could be deposited in one year 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. This policy remains in place during 2015/16.

Despite 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 was slightly ahead of expectations. The charity continues to work to maximise the returns it generates from its investments.

As at 31 March 2016 the Society had £3.5m invested in one-year fixed rate bonds, £1.5m in three and six month bonds and a further £6.9m in corporate deposit accounts.

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

	2016 £m	2014 £m	2013 £m	2012 £m
Restricted reserves excluding NAS Academies Trust	**3.8**	**3.9**	**4.3**	**4.4**
Restricted funds NAS Academies Trust	**8.4**	**7.7**	**4.4**	**0.1**
Unrestricted reserves before pension funds deficit	**36.5**	**35.5**	**35.5**	**35.4**
FRS102 opening deficit on pension funds	**(16.7)**	**(13.5)**	**(16.4)**	**(13.2)**
Change in FRS102 pensions deficit in year	**2.4**	**(3.3)**	**2.8**	**(3.2)**
Reported total reserves as per balance sheet	**34.4**	**30.3**	**30.6**	**23.5**

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 13 October 2016, 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 2016 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Company Balance Sheets, the Group Cash Flow Statement and the related notes numbered 1 to 26.

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 the 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 2016 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Companies Act 2006*, the Charities and *Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (amended).

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*.

Accounts

Consolidated statement of financial activities

(incorporating income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2016

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2016	2016	2016	2016	2015
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income and Endowments from						
Incoming from charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		25,841	2	2,073	27,916	25,577
Social and independent living support		54,690	1	-	54,691	53,892
Autism Expertise		272	-	-	272	310
Social Change & National Voice		77	-	-	77	50
Partner for Life		67	-	-	67	102
Supporting Professionals		3,515	-	-	3,515	3,218
Donations and legacies	3	5,664	3,471	1,188	10,323	11,973
Other trading activities	4	352	-	-	352	404
Investment income		102	2	3	107	128
Other Income	5	1,331	-	6	1,337	145
Total income		**91,911**	**3,476**	**3,270**	**98,657**	**95,799**
Expenditure on						
Raising funds		2,876	-	-	2,876	3,064
Expenditure on Charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		24,477	163	2,607	27,247	25,623
Social and independent living support		52,957	856	-	53,813	50,893
Autism Expertise		2,524	204	-	2,728	2,994
Social Change & National Voice		1,551	811	-	2,361	2,323
Partner for Life		2,844	724	-	3,568	3,051
Supporting Professionals		3,924	793	-	4,717	4,814
Total expenditure	6	**91,153**	**3,551**	**2,607**	**97,310**	**92,762**

Year ended 31 March 2016

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2016	2016	2016	2016	2015
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Net incoming / (expenditure)	**7**	**758**	**(75)**	**663**	**1,346**	**3,037**
Transfers between funds	16-18	-	-	-	-	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit schemes	24	2,641	-	51	2,692	(3,364)
Net movement in funds		**3,399**	**(75)**	**714**	**4,038**	**(328)**
Reconciliation of funds						
Funds brought forward	16-18	18,798	3,862	7,657	30,317	30,644
Fund balances carried forward	**16-18**	**22,198**	**3,788**	**8,371**	**34,357**	**30,317**

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 income of £1.3m (2015: £3.0m).

The notes on pages 58-86 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2016

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2016	2016	2016	2015
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets					
Tang ble assets	8	26,338	27,209	26,338	27,209
Tang ble assets - NAS AT	8	7,314	7,261	-	-
Investments in subsidiaries	9	-	-	-	-
		33,652	**34,470**	**26,338**	**27,209**
Current assets					
Stocks		114	131	114	131
Debtors	11	12,921	9,369	11,078	8,882
Cash deposits		10,493	11,504	10,493	11,504
Cash at bank and in hand		1,133	1,170	1,118	1,135
Cash at bank and in hand - NAS AT		1,454	963	-	-
		26,115	**23,137**	**23,055**	**21,652**
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	9,102	8,243	7,002	7,355
Net current assets		**17,013**	**14,894**	**15,801**	**14,297**
Total assets less current liabilities		**50,665**	**49,364**	**42,139**	**41,506**
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	14-15	1,854	2,151	1,854	2,152
Net assets excluding pension liabilities		**48,811**	**47,213**	**40,285**	**39,354**
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS	24	(14,299)	(16,729)	(14,299)	(16,729)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS AT	24	(155)	(168)	-	-
Net assets including pension liabilities		**34,357**	**30,317**	**25,986**	**22,625**
Funds					
Restricted funds	16	3,788	3,862	3,788	3,862
NAS Academies Trust	17				
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds		7,314	7,261	-	-
Restricted Funds		1,212	564	-	-
Pension reserve - NAS AT		(155)	(168)	-	-
		8,371	7,657	-	-
Unrestricted funds:	18				
Designated funds - fixed assets		26,831	26,044	26,831	26,044
Designated funds - other		3,090	2,454	3,090	2,454
General fund		6,895	7,348	6,895	7,314
Revaluation reserve		(319)	(319)	(319)	(319)
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liabilities		36,497	35,527	36,497	35,493
Pension reserve	18	(14,299)	(16,729)	(14,299)	(16,729)
Unrestricted funds including pension liabilities		22,198	18,798	22,198	18,764
Total funds	**19**	**34,357**	**30,317**	**25,986**	**22,625**

The notes on pages 58-86 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 13 October 2016 and signed on their behalf

Dr Carol Homden CBE, Chair of Trustees

Consolidated cashflow statement

Year ended 31 March 2016	Notes	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	1	318	6,397
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	2	59	(4,171)
Net cash (used) in financing activities	3	(298)	(300)
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		**(555)**	**1,927**
Net cash resources at 1 April		13,637	11,710
Net cash resources at 31 March		13,080	13,637
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		**(557)**	**1,927**

1. Reconciliation of net incoming resources to net cash inflow from operating activities	**2016 £'000**	**2015 £'000**
Net incoming resources	1,347	3,006
Interest receivable	(107)	(128)
Depreciation charges	1,996	1,891
(Profit) / loss on sale of fixed assets	(1,147)	123
Decrease in stock	18	8
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors (excl interest receivable)	(3,539)	12,613
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	865	(11,065)
(Decrease)/Increase in pension liability	249	(51)
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	**318**	**6,397**

2. Cash flows from investing activities	**2016 £'000**	**2015 £'000**
Opening debtor balance	(33)	(10)
Interest income on cash deposits	107	128
Closing debtor	18	33
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	**92**	151
Purchases of property, plant and equipment	(1,318)	(4,322)
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	1,285	-
Net cash provided by (used in) acquiring assets	(33)	(4,322)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	**59**	**(4,171)**

3. Cash flows from financing activities	**2016 £'000**	**2015 £'000**
New loans	-	-
Repayment of interest free loan	-	(2)
Repayment of City Road purchase loan	(298)	(298)
Net cash (used in) financing activities	**(298)**	**(300)**

4. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	**£'000**	**£'000**
Cash in hand	5,577	3,637
Notice deposit (less than 3 months)	7,503	10,000
Total cash & cash equivalents	**13,080**	**13,637**

Notes forming part of the financial statements

1. Company Information

The company is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and registered as a charity in England and Wales and Scotland. The address of the registered office is 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG.

2. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK FRS102 effective from 1 January 2015, 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 48. The particular accounting policies adopted by the Trustees apply to the NAS and all its subsidiaries unless stated otherwise and these policies are descr bed below.

NAS meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions available in FRS102 from the requirements to present a charity only cash flow statement and certain disclosures about the charity's financial instruments.

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. 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*.

Reconciliation with previous generally accepted accounting practice

In preparing the accounts, the Trustees have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS 102 and the Charities SORP FRS 102 the restatement of comparative items was required. In their estimation, the impact of transitioning is not material to the financial statements and therefore the restatement of comparative items is not required. The transition date was 1 April 2014.

Income

All income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to funds, any performance conditions have been met and it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

The following accounting policies are applied to specific income streams:

Donations and legacies

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 entitlement is taken, which is when probate has been granted, estate finalised and a notification received by the executors that a distribution will be made or when it is received. Receipt wholly or in part is probable when amount can be measured reliably and notification has been received of intention to distribute.

Donated services or facilities
These are recognised as income when the charity has control over the term or conditions have been met and the economic benefit from the use by the charity is probable and can be measured reliably. Professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the gift to the charity which is the amount that the charity would have been willing to pay obtain at equivalent economic benefit on the open market, a corresponding amount is then recognised as expenditure in the period of receipt.

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 apportionment bases.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Costs of generating funds

The costs of raising funds include the costs incurred by the fundraising team in raising 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.

Financial instruments

NAS has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash and bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise bank loans and overdrafts, trade and other creditors.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described in the accounting policies and are summarised below:

- Residuary legacies – The charity recognises residuary legacies once probate has been granted which therefore requires an estimation of the amount receivable.
- Pension liabilities – The charity recognises its liability to its defined benefit pension scheme which involves a number of estimations as disclosed in the notes to the accounts.
- Pension provision – The charity has provided for its possible liability in relation to its TPS pension provision totalling £1.077m.

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 poss ble 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 23 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.

Prior year adjustment

Due to a cut off error in the trading subsidiary, Autism UK Limited, trading income relating to the year ended 31 March 2015 was incorrectly recognised in 2016. This has resulted in a prior year restatement to recognise income totalling £43,316 and associated costs totalling £1,299 in the correct accounting period. The adjustment has also resulted in a potential tax liability of £8,403 being provided for.

3. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2016	2016	2016	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Donations and gifts	5,200	1,152	-	6,352	4,988
Legacies	317	2	-	319	223
Grants - Revenue	147	2,317	969	3,433	3,453
Grants - Capital	-	-	219	219	3,309
Total	**5,664**	**3,471**	**1,188**	**10,323**	**11,973**

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

The Society benefits greatly from the involvement and support of its many volunteers who help with our campaigning, befriending, helpline, run our local branches and direct support programmes as well as our advisors, Trustees and councillors. In accordance with FRS102 and the Charities SORP (FRS102), the economic contribution is not recognised in the accounts.

4. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2016	2016	2016	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming resources					
Sponsorships	185	-	-	185	183
Christmas cards	151	-	-	151	188
Other	16	-	-	16	33
Total	**352**	**-**	**-**	**352**	**404**
Resources expended					
Christmas cards	98	-	-	98	105
Total	**98**	**-**	**-**	**98**	**105**

5. Other income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2016	2016	2016	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming resources					
Surplus on sale of assets	1,149	-	-	1,149	-
Other	182	-	6	188	145
Total	**1,331**	**-**	**6**	**1,337**	**145**

6. Analysis of expenditure

	Direct Costs 2016 £'000	Support Costs 2016 £'000	Total Costs 2016 £'000	Total Costs 2015 £'000
Cost of raising funds	2,658	218	2,876	3,064
Charitable expenditure				
Striving for Excellence:				
Education	25,085	2,162	27,247	25,623
Social and independent living support	49,345	4,468	53,813	50,893
Autism Expertise	2,448	279	2,727	2,994
Social Change & National Voice	2,229	132	2,361	2,323
Partner for Life	3,179	388	3,567	3,051
Supporting Professionals	4,368	351	4,719	4,814
Total resources expended	**89,312**	**7,998**	**97,310**	**92,762**

Support costs are made up of:	Costs of raising funds	Education	Social and independent living support	Autism Expertise	Social Change and National Voice	Partner for Life	Supporting Professionals	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Human resources	10	204	465	10	8	23	21	**740**
Information technology	112	576	1,090	226	87	302	214	**2,607**
Finance and business services	70	1,007	2,121	32	27	46	84	**3,387**
Chief executive and quality assurance	10	139	294	4	4	6	12	**469**
Marketing and customer relations management	13	194	409	6	5	9	16	**653**
Chief Operating Officer	3	42	89	1	1	2	4	**142**
Total	**218**	**2,162**	**4,468**	**279**	**132**	**388**	**351**	**7,998**

Governance cost included in support costs was £271k (2015: £260k)

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. Analysis of expenditure continued

Governance cost analysis	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2016 £'000	2016 £'000	2016 £'000	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Company Secretary	106	-	-	106	54
Internal audit	67	-	-	67	85
Meeting expenses	21	-	-	21	48
External audit	53	-	7	60	64
Trustees' expenses	14	-	3	17	9
Total	**261**	**-**	**10**	**271**	**260**

7. Net incoming/(outgoing) resources

	Group		Charity	
	2016 £'000	2015 £'000	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources				
Auditor's remuneration:				
Statutory audits				
– current year	55	63	44	42
– prior year	4	-	4	-
Other services:				
Taxation and Advisory	33	28	31	27
Depreciation:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,998	1,891	1,998	1,891
Profit/loss on disposal of fixed assets:				
Loss on disposal	1,143	123	1,143	123
Operating lease rentals:				
Rent payable on properties	2,448	2,239	2,448	2,239
Hire of equipment	149	149	149	149
Hire of vehicles	788	730	788	730

8. 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 2015	31,550	5,863	1,667	234	4,842	3,636	47,792
Additions	38	203	306	-	518	254	1,319
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(164)	-	(26)	(37)	(19)	-	(190)
Transfers for year	-	3,401	113	-	110	(3,624)	-
As at 31 March 2016	**31,424**	**9,467**	**2,060**	**197**	**5,451**	**266**	**48,865**
Accumulated depreciation							
As at 1 April 2015	5,669	2,806	613	208	4,026	-	13,322
Charge for year	587	341	385	8	677	-	1,998
Released on disposals	(34)	-	(17)	(37)	(19)	-	(107)
Transfers for year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2016	**6,222**	**3,147**	**981**	**179**	**4,684**	**-**	**15,213**
Net book value							
As at 1 April 2015	**25,881**	**3,057**	**1,053**	**26**	**816**	**3,636**	**34,470**
As at 31 March 2016	**25,202**	**6,320**	**1,078**	**18**	**767**	**266**	**33,652**
Included in above							
NBV of NAS AT assets							
As at 1 April 2015	**3,792**	**-**	**14**	**4**	**59**	**3,391**	**7,261**
Additions in the year	38	30	41	-	187	-	**295**
Transfers for year	-	3,346	-	-	45	(3,391)	**-**
Depreciation charged in the year	(67)	(62)	(8)	(2)	(103)	-	**(242)**
As at 31 March 2016	**3,762**	**3,314**	**47**	**3**	**188**	**-**	**7,314**

Freehold properties include land at cost of **£2,983,791** (2015: £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.

9. Investments in subsidiaries

	2016	2015
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**

10. 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
	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Turnover	29,392	11,999	3,271	4,647	65,654	78,757	341	397
Covenanted income from subsidiaries	6,321	7,901	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating charges	(35,030)	(20,181)	(2,607)	(1,316)	(59,565)	(71,132)	(97)	(107)
(Loss)/Surplus	**683**	**(281)**	**664**	**3,331**	**6,089**	**7,625**	**244**	**290**
Administration and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	(13)	(22)

10. Results of trading companies and parent charity continued

	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
	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Surplus/(Deficit) before actuarial (Losses)/Gains	**683**	**(281)**	**664**	**3,331**	**6,089**	**7,625**	**231**	**268**
Actuarial (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	2,641	(3,300)	51	(64)	-	-	-	-
Amount covenanted to the charity	-	-	-	-	(6,089)	(7,625)	(265)	(234)
Retained (deficit) / surplus for the year	**3,324**	**(3,581)**	**715**	**3,267**	**-**	**-**	**(34)**	**34**

The net current assets and share capital and reserves for both NAS Services Limited and Autism UK Limited as 31 March 2016 was £2, representing the share capital in each company (2015: £2 for NAS Services Limited and £34k for Autism UK Limited).

The net assets for the NAS Academies Trust as at 31 March 2016 was £8,372k (2015: £7,659k).

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.

Whilst 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 September 2018.

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.

Transaction with subsidiaries

The transfer under gift aid of trading profits to the charity from its wholly owned subsidiaries NAS Services Ltd and Autism UK Ltd took place during the year.

	2016	2015
NAS Services Ltd	6,089	7,625
Autism UK Ltd	265	234

The charity exercises control over the assets of the NAS Academies Trust and provides support through services to enable the Trust to carry out its charitable purpose. During the year the Trust purchased £107k (2015: £75k) in finance, payroll & HR support, IT Support, project management and marketing services from the charity.

11. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2016	2015 Restated	2016	2015 Restated
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade debtors	10,208	6,881	2,497	-
Other debtors	137	159	137	159
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	-	6,922	6,641
Prepayments and accrued income	2,576	2,329	1,522	2,082
Total	**12,921**	**9,369**	**11,078**	**8,882**

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2016	2015 Restated	2016	2015 Restated
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Loans repayable	297	299	297	299
Trade creditors	2,927	2,708	1,429	2,266
Corporation tax payable	8	8	-	-
Taxation and social security	174	732	224	503
Accruals and Provisions	4,542	3,887	4,247	3,773
Fees invoiced in advance and deferred income	1,174	608	806	514
Total	**9,102**	**8,242**	**7,002**	**7,355**

13. Deferred Income

	Group	Charity
	2016	2016
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April 2015	602	587
Amounts released in year	(808)	(806)
Amounts deferred in year	1,060	1,060
Balance as at 31 March 2016	**854**	**841**

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

	Group		Charity	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Interest free mortgage (Note a)	200	200	200	200
City Road Loan (Note b)	1,636	1,933	1,636	1,933
Trafigura Loan (Note c)	18	18	18	18
Total	**1,854**	**2,151**	**1,854**	**2,152**

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 adults with autism. The charge will be released on 30 November 2036.

Note b: 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 5 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 c: An interest free loan received from Trafigura in relation to the funding of Network Autism to be repaid over three years from 2017.

15. Borrowings

The creditors shown in Note 12 are repayable as follows:	Group		Charity	
	2016	**2015**	**2016**	**2015**
	£'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)	-	-	-	-
Total	**-**	-	**-**	-
City Road loan				
Instalments falling due between one and two years	297	297	297	297
Instalments falling due between two and five years	1,339	1,636	1,339	1,636
Instalments falling due after five years	-	-	-	-
Total	**1,636**	**1,933**	**1,636**	**1,933**
Trafigura interest free loan				
Instalments falling due between one and two years	-	-	-	-
Instalments falling due between two and five years	18	18	18	18
Instalments falling due after five years	-	-	-	-
Total	**18**	**18**	**18**	**18**
Loans due after five years and not repayable by instalment:				
Interest free mortgages	200	200	200	200
Total	**1,854**	**2,151**	**1,854**	**2,151**

16. Movement on restricted funds

	Balance 1 April 2015	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Striving for Excellence:				
Education	1,682	103	(163)	1,622
Social and independent living support	960	795	(856)	899
Autism Expertise	52	198	(204)	46
Social Change & National Voice	839	835	(811)	863
Partner for Life	200	868	(724)	344
Supporting Professionals	129	677	(793)	13
Total	**3,862**	**3,476**	**(3,551)**	**3,787**

There are no significant individual restricted funds with balances of over £200,000 as at 31 March 2016.

Big Lottery Funding

	Balance 1 April 2015	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
GLS08 Moving Forward Befriending BLF	49	136	181	4
DAL18 Empowering Families Big Lottery	17	22	28	11
SCN29 Young Campaigners	3	37	39	1
Total	**69**	**195**	**248**	**16**

17. NAS Academies Trust

	Balance 1 April 2015	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Actuarial losses	Balance 31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds	7,261	219	(242)	76	-	7,314
Restricted Revenue Grants	564	3,051	(2,327)	(76)	-	1,212
Pension Reserve	(168)	-	(38)	-	51	(155)
Total	**7,657**	**3,270**	**(2,607)**	-	51	**8,371**

18. Movement on unrestricted funds

	Balance 1 April 2015 Restated £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Capital transfers £'000	Actuarial losses £'000	Other transfers £'000	Balance 31 March 2016 £'000
General fund	7,348	90,570	(88,523)	(1,318)	-	(1,182)	6,895
Designated funds:							
Fixed assets	26,044	1,149	(1,680)	1,318	-	-	26,831
Total Capital Commitments - see Note 18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
City Road Refurbishment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Helen Allison Modular Classroom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Daldorch Refurbishment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Catrine Bank Refurbishment	104	-	(87)	-	-	-	17
Total Minor Project Works inc developments, maintenance and dilapidations	250	-	-	-	-	133	383
Property related growth and developments in Schools and Adult Services	354	-	(87)	-	-	133	400
IT Strategy Development	150	-	-	-	-	350	500
Pay Award	500	-	(442)	-	-	(58)	-
Enterprise Activity Fund	62	-	-	-	-	38	100
Supporter Events Development	117	-	(91)	-	-	(26)	-
Supporting Offender Network	15	-	(15)	-	-	-	-
Autism Education Trust	156	192	(104)	-	-	-	1
South Wales Adult Development Williams Legacy	100	-	-	-	-	(100)	-
Web, CRM and Content Development	-	-	-	-	-	175	175
Donor Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	670	670
Local Authority Pension Scheme Reserve	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Total Designated Funds exc Fixed Assets	**2,454**	**192**	**(739)**	**-**	**-**	**1,182**	**3,090**
Revaluation fund	(319)	-	-	-	-	-	(319)
Total Designated Funds excluding pension reserve	**35,527**	**91,911**	**(90,942)**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**36,496**
Pension reserve	(16,729)	-	(211)	-	2,641	-	**(14,299)**
Total unrestricted funds	**18,798**	**91,911**	**(91,153)**	**-**	**2,641**	**-**	**22,198**

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.

Other transfers: These are amounts transferred from general reserves or other designated funds to match expenditure on projects as definied by the board and senior management team.

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.
Property related growth and developments in Schools and Adult Services	To fund plans for refurbishments to existing facilities in the next 12-18 months and underwrite the initial costs of small property based growth and development projects. To also fund dilapidation costs related to lease terminations.
IT Strategy Development	To support the development and roll-out of a new IT strategy over the next financial year.
Enterprise Fund	To underwrite the start up of new, sustainable small enterprise initiatives in 2016-17.
Autism Education Trust	To fund the ongoing development of the work of the Autism Education Trust in addition to that funded by the DfE.
Web, CRM and Content Development	To fund the development of the NAS website and CRM to support the delivery of the NAS strategy.
Donor Acquisition	To fund further investment in the donor acquisition programme to generate future additional unrestricted income.
LGPS reserve	To underwrite the contingent liability relating to a Section 75 debt in the Somerset LGPS
Revaluation fund	This fund sets aside the loss on the value of the ex 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 during 2016 when the future plans for the school are finalised.
Pension Reserve	Represents the theoretical deficit on the defined benefit pension schemes as calculated using FRS102 methodology. See Note 24 for further details.

Completed Designated Funds

Pay Award	This fund was created to enable some improvements to pay to be made, particularly for staff on the lowest pay grades.
Supporter Events Development	To underwrite the costs of developing new supporter fundraising events to be piloted in 2015-16.
Supporting Offender Network	To fund the costs of delivering events and newsletters for the offender's network in 2015-16.
National Autism Partnership Group	This fund was used to enable NAS continued involvement in the National Autism Partnership Group throughout 2014-15.
South Wales Adult Development - Williams Legacy	This fund was created to develop adult services in South Wales during 2014-15 using funding received from a legacy.

Restatement of prior year general funds

Within unrestricted funds the prior year general funds has been restated as follows

	£'000
General fund as previously stated at 31 March 2015	7,314
Prior year adjustment	34
General fund as previously stated at 31 March 2015 restated	**7,348**

19. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2016 £'000	Restricted funds 2016 £'000	NAS AT Restricted funds 2016 £'000	Total funds 2016 £'000
Fixed assets	24,838	1,501	7,313	33,652
Net current assets	13,494	2,305	1,213	17,012
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(1,835)	(18)	-	(1,854)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	(14,299)	-	(155)	(14,454)
Net assets including pension liabilities	**22,197**	**3,788**	**8,371**	**34,356**

20. Operating lease commitments

Lease Note

Minimum lease payments in respect of operating leases were:

	Property		Other leases	
	2016 £'000	2015 £'000	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Operating leases which expire:				
Not later than one year	2,060	2,555	752	600
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,373	8,201	1,188	909
Later than five years	11,697	10,409	-	1
	21,130	**21,165**	**1,940**	**1,510**

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.

21. Capital commitments

Committed building projects are:	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Ongoing projects		
NAS AT		
Thames Valley School	17	45
Church Lawton School	58	149
	75	194
Total committed	**75**	**194**

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.

22. Taxation

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

23. Information regarding employees and Trustees

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

	2016 FTE	2015 FTE
Footing the Bill	25	26
Striving for Excellence:		
Education	762	707
Social and independent living support	1847	1,738
Autism Expertise	22	31
Social Change & National Voice	27	37
Partner for Life	66	52
Supporting Professionals	57	59
Behind the scenes	120	131
Total	**2,926**	**2,781**

The average number of employed staff in the year was 3,509 (2014-15: 3,421).

Staff costs comprise:	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Gross wages and salaries	56,633	55,197
Agency staff	5,793	4,065
Social security costs	4,036	3,956
Pension costs	1,847	2,156
Total	**68,308**	**65,374**

During the year £110k was paid out in redundancy and termination agreements to staff. All obligations were identified and met during the financial year. There were no payments outstanding or accrued at the balance sheet date.

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

Salary range	2016 Number	2015 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	10	13
£70,001 - £80,000	10	8
£80,001 - £90,000	2	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	2
£100,001 - £110,000	1	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-
£130,001 - £140,000	1	2
Total	**26**	**26**

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

	2016 Number	2015 Number
Defined contribution schemes:		
NAS Stakeholder Scheme	15	16
Defined benefit schemes:		
Brent Pension Scheme	-	-
Teachers' Pension Scheme	10	9
Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme	1	1
Total	**26**	**26**

	£'000	£'000
NAS contribution was:		
Defined contribution schemes	63	93
Defined benefit schemes	139	75
Total	**202**	**168**

Further details of all NAS pension schemes are shown in Note 24.

The senior management team is made up of 10 directors led by the Chief Executive Officer. The employment benefit of the team was £879k (2015: £855k).

No Trustee or person related or connected by business to them, has received any remuneration from the charity during the year (2015: none).

27 trustees and National Forum members were reimbursed expenses during the year totalling £9,225. Out of this total, £1,246 related to the Academies Trust. This principally represents reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending Trustees' and National Forum meetings.

The charity purchased insurance costing £28,461 (2015: £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.

24. 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 contr butory, 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 56 active members (2015: 55 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 £383,240 (2014-15: £357,113).

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 eight active members (2015: 10 active members). Employer's contr butions in the year totalled £61,309.68 (2014-15: £61,931.31).

In accordance with FRS102 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 2016 are estimated to be £800,000.

Assumptions

Brent Scheme. 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 FRS102 purposes were:

Principal financial assumptions

Brent Scheme	**2016 %pa**	**2015 %pa**	**2014 %pa**	**2013 %pa**	**2012 %pa**
Inflation	-	-	-	-	-
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.0	4.1	4.4	5.1	4.8
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	-	-	-	-	-
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.5
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-	-	-
Discount rate	3.5	3.2	4.3	4.5	4.8

Principal demographic assumptions:

Brent Scheme	31 March 2016	31 March 2015	31 March 2014	31 March 2016	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
	Males	Males	Males	Females	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	CMI_2010	CMI_2010	CMI_2010	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	22.0	24.3	24.3	24.3
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 45)	24.4	24.4	24.4	26.8	26.8	26.8

* 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 2016	31 March 2015
	%pa	%pa
Equities	3.5	3.2
Bonds	3.5	3.2
Property	3.5	3.2
Cash	3.5	3.2

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 2016	31 March 2015	31 March 2014
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Value as at:			
Notional value of assets	12,453	12,301	10,827
Present value of liabilities	(25,098)	(27,174)	(22,865)
Net pension (liabilities)	**(12,645)**	**(14,873)**	**(12,038)**

24. Pension commitments continued

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000
Period ending			
Current service cost	416	381	461
Past service cost	-	-	-
Interest cost	870	978	1,216
Expected return on assets	(400)	(674)	(769)
Losses on curtailments and settlements	-	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	**886**	**685**	**908**
Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period			
Opening present value of liabilities	**27,174**	**22,865**	**27,062**
Current service cost	416	381	461
Interest cost	870	978	1,216
Contribution by participants	86	94	101
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	(2,952)	3,525	(5,369)
Losses on curtailments	-	-	-
Estimated benefits paid out	(496)	(669)	(606)
Past service cost	-	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	**25,098**	**27,174**	**22,865**
Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period			
Opening fair value of assets	**12,301**	**10,827**	**12,639**
Expected return on assets	400	674	769
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(638)	598	(2,887)
Contribution by employers	800	777	811
Contribution by participants	86	94	101
Net benefits paid out	(496)	(669)	(606)
Closing fair value of assets	**12,453**	**12,301**	**10,827**
Actual return on assets			
Expected return on assets	400	674	769
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(638)	598	(2,887)
Actual return on assets	**(238)**	**1,272**	**(2,118)**
Analysis of amounts recognised in SOCI*			
Total actuarial gains / (losses)	2,314	(2,927)	2,482
Total gains / (losses in SOCI	2,314	(2,927)	2,482

* SOCI (statement of comprehensive income)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

Brent Scheme:	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	31 March 2013 £'000	31 March 2012 £'000
Fair value of assets	12,453	12,301	10,827	12,639	10,728
Present value of liabilities	(25,098)	(27,174)	(22,865)	(27,062)	(22,187)
Deficit	**(12,645)**	**(14,873)**	**(12,038)**	**(14,423)**	**(11,459)**

History of experience gains and losses

	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	31 March 2013 £'000	31 March 2012 £'000
Experience gains/(losses) on assets	(638)	598	(2,887)	773	(827)
Experience gains/(losses) on liabilities	331	194	3,778	35	(268)

Berkshire Scheme

The LGPS 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 £47,885 (2015: £24,934). 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 2016 are estimated to be £45,000.

Principal financial assumptions	31 March 2016 %pa	31 March 2015 %pa	31 March 2014 %pa
Inflation	3.4	3.4	3.7
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.3	4.4	4.7
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	0.9	1	1
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.5	2.6	2.6
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-
Discount rate	3.9	3.5	4.6
Discount rate* – real	0.5	0.1	0.9

* The assumptions are set with reference to market conditions at 31 March 2016. Our estimate of the Employer's liabilities is 32 years.

The discount rate is the yield at the 25 year point on the Merrill Lynch AA rated corporate bond curve which has been chosen to meet the requirements of FRS102 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 2016 Males	31 March 2016 Females	31 March 2015 Males	31 March 2015 Females
Retiring today	22.9	26.2	22.8	26.1
Retiring in 20 years	25.2	28.6	25.1	28.4

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.

24. Pension commitments continued

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 2015 for the year to 31 March 2016). 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 2016 £'000**	**31 March 2015 £'000**
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	184	127
Present value of liabilities	(339)	(295)
Net pension (liabilities)	**(155)**	**422**

Analysis of income and expenditure	**31 March 2016 £'000**	**31 March 2015 £'000**
Period ending		
Service cost	76	31
Net interest on the defined liability (asset)	6	4
Administration expenses	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	**82**	**35**

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Period ending	**31 March 2016**	**31 March 2015**
Opening present value of liabilities	**295**	**179**
Current service cost	76	31
Interest cost	11	9
Change in financial assumptions	(59)	67
Contributions by scheme payments	16	9
Closing present value of liabilities	**339**	**295**

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	**127**	**84**
Interest on assets	5	5
Return on assets less interest	(8)	4
Contribution by employers	44	25
Contribution by participants	16	9
Closing fair value of assets	**184**	**127**

Actual return on assets	**31 March 2016 £'000**	**31 March 2015 £'000**
Interest on assets	5	5
Return on assets less interest	(8)	4
Actual return on assets	**(3)**	**9**

Analysis of amounts recognised in SOCI*

Total actuarial gains / (losses)	51	(63)
Total losses in SOCI	51	(63)

* SOCI (statement of comprehensive income)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000
Fair value of assets	184	127
Present value of liabilities	(339)	(295)
Deficit	**(155)**	**(168)**

History of experience gains and losses

Experience gains/(losses) on assets	-	-
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.

Sensitivity analysis	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustment to discount rate	**+0.1%**	**0.0%**	**-0.1%**
Present value of total obligation	329	339	349
Projected service cost	61	63	65
Adjustment to long-term salary increase	**+0.1%**	**0.0%**	**-0.1%**
Present value of total obligation	341	339	337
Projected service cost	63	63	63
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	**+0.1%**	**0.0%**	**-0.1%**
Present value of total obligation	348	339	330
Projected service cost	65	63	61
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	**+1 year**	**none**	**-1 year**
Present value of total obligation	348	339	331
Projected service cost	65	63	61

For the adjustment to the mortality age rating assumption, we are essentially assuming a member has the mortaility 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.

24. Pension commitments continued

Somerset Scheme

Contributions: The employer's regular contributions to the Somerset Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2016 are estimated to be £52,000.

Principal financial assumptions	**2016 %pa**	**2015 %pa**	**2014 %pa**	**2013 %pa**
Inflation (RPI)	3.2	3.2	3.6	3.3
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.1	4.2	4.6	4.7
Rate of general increase in salaries – real	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.4
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.3	2.4	2.8	2.5
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	-	-	-	-
Discount rate	3.6	3.3	4.4	4.1
Discount rate* – real	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.8

* The assumptions are set with reference to market conditions at 31 March 2016. Our estimate of the Employer's liabilities is 32 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 FRS102 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 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 2016 Males	**31 March 2016 Females**	**31 March 2015 Males**	**31 March 2015 Females**
Retiring today	23.8	26.2	23.7	26.1
Retiring in 20 years	26.1	28.5	26.0	28.4

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 2015 for the year to 31 March 2016). 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 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000
Value as at:			
Notional value of assets	2,795	2,840	2,571
Present value of liabilities	(4,449)	(4,696)	(4,022)
Net pension (liabilities)	**(1,654)**	**(1,856)**	**(1,451)**

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000
Period ending		
Current service cost	55	59
Past service cost	-	-
Interest cost	153	176
Expected return on assets	(27)	(159)
Losses on curtailments and settlements	-	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	**181**	**76**

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Period ending	31 March 2016	31 March 2015
Opening present value of liabilities	**4,696**	**4,022**
Current service cost	55	59
Interest cost	153	176
Contribution by participants	10	10
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	(329)	543
Losses on curtailments	-	-
Net benefits paid out	(136)	(116)
Past service cost	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	**4,449**	**4,696**

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	**2,840**	**2,571**
Expected return on assets	27	159
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(2)	170
Contribution by employers	56	44
Contribution by participants	10	12
Net benefits paid out	(136)	(116)
Closing fair value of assets	**2,795**	**2,840**

Actual return on assets

Expected return on assets	27	159
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(2)	170
Actual return on assets	**25**	**329**

24. Pension commitments continued

Analysis of amounts recognised in SOCI*	March 2016	31 March 2015
Net assets (defined liability)	263	(373)
Total losses in SOCI	263	(373)

* SOCI (statement of comprehensive income)

History of asset values, present value of liabilities and deficit

	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2014 £'000	31 March 2013 £'000	31 March 2012 £'000
Fair value of assets	2,795	2,840	2,571	2,308	2,047
Present value of liabilities	(4,449)	(4,696)	(4,022)	(4,250)	(3,756)
Deficit	**(1,654)**	**(1,856)**	**(1,451)**	**(1,942)**	**(1,709)**

History of experience gains and losses

Experience gains/(losses) on assets	(2)	170	202	195	(105)
Experience gains/(losses) on liabilities	-	-	439	-	-

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	4,373	4,449	4,526
Projected service cost	49	50	51
Adjustment to long-term salary increase	**+0.1%**	**0.0%**	**-0.1%**
Present value of total obligation	4,458	4,449	4,440
Projected service cost	50	50	50
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	**+0.1%**	**0.0%**	**-0.1%**
Present value of total obligation	4,518	4,449	4,381
Projected service cost	51	50	49
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	**+1 year**	**none**	**-1 year**
Present value of total obligation	4,582	4,449	4,320
Projected service cost	51	50	49

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's main scheme, comprising auto-enrolment and enhanced schemes. The scheme is administered by Scottish Widows. There are currently 1874 active members in auto-enrolment and 410 active members in our enhanced scheme. 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 £398,885.

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 sum of £1.0m was set aside. Note 18 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 hold a provision of £1.077m in the accounts for additional pension costs.

25. Financial instruments

At the balance sheet date the consolidated group held financial assets at amortised cost and short term deposits compromising cash and short term deposits, trade debtors and other debtors of £25,234k (2015: £22,279k) and financial liabilities at amortised cost, compromising expense and other creditors of £9,215k (2015: £9,045k). Total interest income received in respect of financial assets held at amortised cost totalled £107k (2015: £128k).

26. Consolidated statement of financial activities comparatives previous year

Year ended 31 March 2015	Unrestricted funds 2015 £'000	Restricted funds 2015 £'000	NAS AT Restricted funds 2015 £'000	Total funds 2015 £'000
Income and Endowments from				
Incoming from charitable activities				
Striving for Excellence				
Education	24,980	9	697	25,686
Social and independent living support	53,878	14	-	53,892
Autism Expertise	307	30	-	310
Social Change & National Voice	20	-	-	50
Partner for Life	100	2	-	102
Supporting Professionals	3,218	-	-	3,218
Donations and legacies	4,391	3,634	3,948	11,973
Other trading activities	404	-	-	404
Investment income	127	1	-	128
Other Income	34	-	2	36
Total income	**87,459**	**3,693**	**4,647**	**95,799**
Expenditure on				
Raising funds	3,064	-	-	3,064
Expenditure on Charitable activities				
Striving for Excellence				
Education	23,923	384	1,316	25,623
Social and independent living support	50,053	840	-	50,893
Autism Expertise	2,524	516	-	2,994
Social Change & National Voice	1,551	566	-	2,323
Partner for Life	2,844	836	-	3,051
Supporting Professionals	3,924	956	-	4,814
Total expenditure	**87,348**	**4,098**	**1,316**	**92,762**
Net incoming / (expenditure)	**113**	**(407)**	**3,331**	**3,037**
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit schemes	(3,300)	-	(64)	(3,364)
Net movement in funds	**(3,187)**	**(407)**	**3,267**	**(327)**
Reconciliation of funds				
Funds brought forward	21,985	4,268	4,391	30,644
Fund balances carried forward	**18,798**	**3,861**	**7,657**	**30,318**

Grant, 11, rides the waves at a surf school set up by our Moray and Nairn Branch in summer 2015.

The National Autistic Society

“As a single parent I was alone and lost. No one else understood. My only beacon in the dark was The National Autistic Society’s Helpline. I would call distraught and utterly bereft and they never failed to reassure and offer positive guidance, always suggesting new ways forward.”

Lindsey

We are the UK’s leading autism charity. Since we began over 50 years ago, we have been pioneering new ways to support people and understand autism. We continue to learn every day from the children and adults we support in our schools and care services.

Based on our experience, and with support from our members, donors and volunteers, we provide life-changing information and advice to millions of autistic people, families and friends so that more people can make informed decisions about their lives. And we support professionals, politicians and the public to understand autism better so that more autistic people of all ages can be understood, supported and appreciated for who they are.

Until everyone understands.

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