

Trustees' annual report and accounts

Directors' report and
financial statements

Year ended: 31 March 2017



Until everyone understands

Last year at The National

We transformed lives

by being a trusted source of support and practical advice.



5,400,215 visits to our website,
more than ever before.



20,587 Helpline calls answered – 28% more than last year.



114 National Autistic Society branches and groups
across the UK, providing much-valued peer support through
networks of committed volunteers.



2,460 parents supported through our **EarlyBird** training courses.



We ran **seven** specialist schools and over **70** services
supporting adults.

We **planned and designed** our **National Autistic Society
Autism Centre, Belfast** this year – the first of its kind in
Northern Ireland.



Three of our schools received '**Outstanding**' ratings from
Ofsted this year.

Our **third** purpose-built **Cullum Centre** opened at
Hinchley Wood School in Surrey. The Centre will help
autistic children to thrive in a mainstream school.



Thanks to our staff, volunteers, funders, fundraisers, donors and
attitudes and building a society

Autistic Society...

We challenged society's attitudes to autism

by working with businesses and policy-makers to change laws and services.

We launched our **Too Much Information** campaign to improve understanding of autism among the public.

Fifty six million people worldwide viewed our launch film featuring ten-year-old Alex in a shopping centre.



We trained **11,000** teachers, health workers and other professionals.

Every new teacher in England will be required to learn about the needs of autistic children and young people as part of their initial teacher training, a win for our **Every Teacher** campaign.



We planned our **first ever film** and **media awards** to encourage depictions of autistic people and their experiences in mainstream media.

We helped **Marks & Spencer** launch an '**easy-dressing**' range of autism-friendly school wear.



2,502 employers, colleagues and autistic people were trained through our employment training programme.



Nearly **30,000** people signed our petition to close the autism employment gap.



32 organisations signed up to our **Autism Friendly Award** this year. These include airports, sports stadia, museums and local shops, adding up to a combined footfall of about **50 million people**.

supporters for their support in transforming lives, challenging that works for autistic people.



Alex, star of our *Too Much Information* campaign, using our autism virtual reality headset



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Cover photo: Alex, star of our *Too Much Information* campaign

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**.

Annual report

From the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive

In 2015 we set out our ambitions for The National Autistic Society for the next five years in our Strategic Plan.

After two years, we are proud to report that we are achieving greater reach and impact than ever before, determined in our continued resolve to improve the lives of autistic people and their families.

There are now 114 National Autistic Society branches and groups across the UK, providing much-valued local support through networks of committed volunteers. Our Helpline continues to support worried parents, autistic people, family members and professionals, answering 20,587 enquiries this year – 28% more than last year.

Our digital resources reached more people than ever before, with our website receiving 5,400,215 visits. Research Autism's invaluable information service was also transferred to our charity, and we are very pleased to be able to continue this service. These services complement the conferences, awards, accreditation and training we provide to improve autism practice among professionals.

Our charity now directly educates more children than ever before, with Ofsted paying tribute to the outstanding quality and distinctive approaches we use. The opening of the third Cullum Centre means that more autistic children will have access to expert educational and specialist support to help them thrive in a mainstream school. This is only possible due to the generosity of the Cullum Family Trust.

New developments in adult services include the transformation of a former school into a dedicated young people's service at Kingsley House, to reflect the changing needs of those it supports.

Like all organisations involved in social care, we sometimes face challenges in making sure the high quality in most of our services is reflected across all our services. To this end, we have acted swiftly whenever necessary to ensure quality. And we are operating in an increasingly difficult financial environment. To address both quality and funding issues, we have worked closely with our commissioning local authorities to make sure we can continue to provide distinctive, high quality services which are financially sustainable.

In all these ways, we have directly supported tens of thousands of people – but we know from what autistic people and their families tell us that better diagnosis and support remains sorely needed. We are determined to push on towards all 700,000 autistic people in the UK feeling supported, understood and appreciated.

In our last annual report, we announced we would be launching a three year campaign to improve understanding of autism among the public. *Too Much Information* was launched in response to research which found that although 99.5% of people in the UK had heard of autism, only 16% of autistic people and their families think the public understand autism in a meaningful way.

This first year has been an extraordinary success. Fifty six million people viewed our launch film featuring ten-year-old Alex in a shopping centre. Year two will build on this success to highlight the challenges faced by autistic people in everyday situations, like using transport or at work. Most importantly we are encouraging small changes in the public's behaviour as well as in their attitudes to autism – *until everyone understands.*

We have continued to work tirelessly to make sure policy-makers across the UK hear and understand the needs and concerns of all autistic people and their families. As a result of our *Every Teacher* campaign, the Government announced in summer 2016 that every new teacher in England will be required to learn about the needs of autistic children and young people as part of their initial teacher training.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we are determined to make even more difference through the opening of a new Enterprise Campus in Essex, made possible thanks to the extraordinary support of the Anderson Foundation. From September, this specially designed campus will include an innovative secondary school, a diagnostic centre, and an enterprise centre to put skills for life and employment at the heart of the curriculum.

None of this would be possible without the energy, commitment and skills of our Patron HRH The Countess of Wessex, Trustees and supporters and the thousands of staff and volunteers who make a difference every day. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you.



Carol Homden

Dr Carol Homden, CBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Mark Lever

Mark Lever
Chief Executive



Opening of our third Cullum Centre in Surrey



Thanks to Thurrock Branch, pictured here, and our other local branches for helping to promote our *Too Much Information* campaign



Autistic adult Rachel Brown benefited from our employment support at work.

Strategic report

Part 1: Our vision, achievements and the year ahead

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, their families and friends. 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.

In working towards our vision this year we focused on a number of key areas:

- increasing our response rates and support provided to those calling our Helpline through the use of trained volunteers, thanks to the support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Cullum Family Trust
- transforming the public's level of awareness of autism into understanding through the launch of our groundbreaking *Too Much Information* campaign



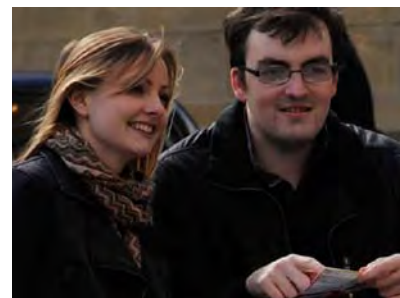
- supporting the professional development of practitioners in the field of autism by both campaigning for statutory changes in their training and by providing high quality conferences and courses
- enhancing the profile and quality of our services by expanding their reach through new developments, and improving their impact through enhanced recruitment and training of specialist staff
- the ongoing challenge of raising increased voluntary funds to support all of our vital charitable work.

Being a partner for life to autistic people and families

1. We answered 28% more enquiries to our Helpline than last year

That's 20,587 enquiries from worried parents, autistic people, family members and professionals throughout the year. In March, we answered 1,350 calls – the most in a single month since 2009. Together with emails, we answered 70,648 enquiries overall.

We also supported 205 autistic people through our partnership with Brain in Hand, an app which gives autistic people personalised support with day-to-day tasks. This success is thanks in part to 38 fantastic volunteers, who gave us 2,889 hours of their time and skills and answered over 15% of enquiries over the year.



2. We developed life-changing services in Northern Ireland and Scotland

We planned and designed our National Autistic Society Autism Centre, Belfast this year – the first of its kind in Northern Ireland – ready for building to begin next year. As well as raising nearly £70,000 towards the costs, we worked with commissioning bodies and user groups to help shape the project. Autism-friendly, modern and welcoming, the centre will have the needs of autistic people and their families at its heart. Supporting 40-50 individuals when full, it will also be available to the wider autism community – branches, family support, and social groups, among others.

In West Lothian, our first ever support centre in the area – NASplus – opened thanks to funding from the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland. The centre supports autistic adults through drop-in surgeries, phone, email and social groups.

We also:

- received 5,400,215 visits to our website
- assessed 111 autistic people (87 children and young people and 24 adults) at our Lorna Wing assessment and diagnostic centre

- supported 2,460 parents through: our EarlyBird training course (1,293), EarlyBird Plus training (999) and Healthy Minds training (39).
- trained 412 autistic people on managing money with our online training
- grew our volunteer branches to 114, the largest number ever
- helped 13 young people get paid employment within six months, and 34 begin voluntary work, training courses or further education through our Moving Forward employment service.
- helped Marks & Spencer launch an 'easy-dressing' range of autism-friendly school wear – our pupils at Helen Allison School helped to test it
- took on Research Autism's invaluable information service so autistic people, their families and professionals can continue to find information about approaches and interventions.

Next year we will:

- roll out our Teen Life programme to help parents better understand and support their autistic teenagers
- vastly increase our diagnostic service by opening a new Lorna Wing assessment and diagnostic centre at our Enterprise Campus in Essex
- carry out research among young people, parents, carers and teachers on the support they get in schools
- review our support offer for autistic adults.

Sharing best practice with professionals

1. We grew knowledge and understanding of autism in the workplace

Our *Too Much Information* campaign in October focused on autism in the workplace, and the challenges many autistic people face at work, or looking for work. Our film, watched by over 1.2 million people, showed young adult Max getting overwhelmed by the sensory and processing difficulties around job interviews. Nearly 30,000 people signed our petition to close the autism employment gap, helping to open up conversations with Government about the issue, which led to the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt MP, saying 'Yes, yes and yes' to our key asks.

Meanwhile, 540 employers and HR professionals received our *Autistic Talent* newsletter containing regular information and advice about supporting autistic people, and we trained 2,502 employers, colleagues and autistic people through our employment training programme.



2. We hosted a hugely successful autism congress in Europe



In September, we built our reputation as the leading voice on autism in the UK by hosting the XI Autism-Europe International Congress in Edinburgh. Experts from across the world gathered to share their knowledge and expertise, with 1,700 delegates coming from all around the world – including Europe, South America, New Zealand and Japan – to attend the sold out event. Over 300 speakers shared advances in autism knowledge with researchers, professionals, autistic people and their families.

We also deepened professionals' understanding of autism, with:

- 24,439 signed up to our *Autism Insight* regular information and advice newsletter
- 6,975 completing our training and consultancy programmes
- 3,545 attending our conferences
- 10,196 being members of Network Autism, our website for autism professionals
- 126 becoming licensed EarlyBird trainers, delivering our support programmes to parents and carers, 60 becoming licensed EarlyBird Plus trainers and 41 Healthy Minds trainers
- 122 trained in diagnosis at our Lorna Wing assessment and diagnostic centre
- 551 services and schools taking part in the three year process of working towards autism accreditation, with 122 receiving accreditation this year.



Pupil at our Helen Allison School modelling the Marks & Spencer 'easy-dressing' range of autism-friendly school wear.



Sarah Hendrickx speaking at our Professional Conference 2017.

Next year we will:

- continue to share our expertise and knowledge across the globe, built up over 50 years of practical delivery through our website, Network Autism, and our thriving international training and consultancy business.
- deliver a series of conferences and events drawing top international speakers
- launch an online training module on understanding women and girls on the autism spectrum
- roll out our Teen Life programme through training and licensing to help more professionals support parents of autistic teenagers, and those teenagers themselves.

Driving social change

1. We helped millions of people understand autism better

The launch film for our public awareness campaign, *Too Much Information*, got a phenomenal 56 million views around the world. It showed 10-year-old Alex experiencing sensory overload in a shopping centre, and having a meltdown. Eight thousand people tried our 'virtual reality' version of Alex's experience at intu shopping centres and Autism Shows around the UK, and 17,000 people signed up to our interactive map to show they cared about autism understanding.

TOO MUCH INFORMATION

Our autism section on the *Guardian* got 450,000 views, and 53% said what they found there made them more likely to support our charity.

2. We pushed the Government to improve diagnosis and education experiences for families

Our campaign to get waiting times for diagnosis reduced – which achieved a three-hour debate in Parliament – led to the Government pledging to do more to get diagnosis waiting times monitored. We also got local commissioners in several areas to commit to taking action to bring these waiting times down.

In education, our research showed many families continue to have long waits and lengthy battles to get the support their children need. After we told the Minister responsible what needed to change, the Government announced several measures to help. Two changes were more funding for transferring children's statements to education, health and care plans (EHCPs), and a single point of appeal through the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Tribunal for health, social care and education. Both things we called for. These changes will make the challenges that bit easier for parents.

3. We signed up 32 organisations to become autism-friendly

Our Autism Friendly Award, a standard for public-facing shops, businesses and spaces who want to be accessible to autistic people, is an innovative way of spreading understanding in the high street.



Chelmsford Museum

The 32 organisations we signed up this year add up to a combined footfall of about 50 million people.

The award holders range from airports, sports stadia and museums to heritage sites and local shops. Across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, 12 organisations are set to apply for the award as part of the 'Friendly Region' projects there. By reviewing award-holders each year we'll be pushing them to keep growing and developing their employees' understanding and good practice.



Aberdeen FC – Pittodrie Stadium

4. We pushed for teachers and GPs to get better support

Our campaigning for autism to be included in initial teacher training was successful this year. The Government's latest framework says autism needs to be part of the training all teachers get from September 2018. Alongside this major achievement, we supported 13,324 teachers and educational professionals with regular advice and guidance through our email resource, *MyWorld*, and shared free classroom resource packs on building awareness, which were downloaded over 60,000 times, as part of World Autism Awareness Week.

As well as helping teachers, we worked with the Royal College of GPs to produce an autism toolkit so that GPs are better equipped to recognise and support their autistic patients.

We also:

- campaigned on the Autism Bill in Wales, which saw all major parties except Labour including a commitment to an Act in their manifestos in the lead up to the Assembly elections
- reached the list of top 10 charities that MPs rated as effective in Parliament
- planned our first ever film and media awards to encourage depictions of autistic people and their experiences in mainstream media.

Next year we will:

- launch the second phase of *Too Much Information* to convert public understanding into practical knowledge of how to help
- sign up a further 60 establishments to the Autism Friendly Award across the UK
- hold our first ever Autism Uncut film and media awards to recognise and boost the inclusion of autism in film, television and other media
- support the All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism on an inquiry into education for autistic children in England.

**AUTISM
UNCUT**

AUTISM UNCUT FILM & MEDIA AWARDS 2017

Providing excellent schools and services

1. We opened another Cullum Centre and developed a brand new Enterprise Campus



In November, we opened our third purpose-built inclusion centre with Surrey County Council at Hinchley Wood School. With room for up to 20 students, trained staff at the Cullum Centre support the young people there to thrive in mainstream lessons, offering extra academic support, occupational and speech and language therapies, life skills lessons, and more.



Meanwhile, preparation for our innovative new Enterprise Campus in Essex continued rapidly. Opening in September 2017, the campus will combine a new school, a diagnostic centre and an enterprise centre. Planning, design and building work progressed, as well as teacher recruitment and pupil referrals for the brand new Anderson School.

2. Our schools and services got excellent Ofsted and CQC results

A testament to the dedication of our amazing staff, three of our schools received 'Outstanding' ratings this year, including Helen Allison School, Radlett Lodge School, and Robert Ogden School's boarding provision and children's home. Our services also did well. Hoylands House in North Yorkshire was rated 'Outstanding', and was shortlisted as a finalist for the 3rd Sector Care Awards and LaingBuisson Award for health and social care. Kingsley House and Stonepit Close residential services also got elements of 'Outstanding' ratings.

Our community services in Croydon, Kent and Kingston, and Neath residential service in Wales, all got good CQC reports.

3. We improved the recruitment of support workers into our schools and services

To make sure we are delivering the best care in a difficult climate for recruitment, we launched a brand new campaign to hire more staff in our schools and services in September 2016, targeting support workers to join our schools and services and help autistic people make an 'Everyday Breakthrough.' The campaign led to an increase in monthly job applications to these roles of 78%. The campaign film, which showed real examples of passionate and committed staff from our schools and services, reached an audience of 80,000 on Facebook.





A pupil enjoys the gym equipment at our Helen Allison School.

We also:

- launched The National Autistic Society Academy, our framework for supporting our staff to deliver amazing outcomes across adult services, with 63 staff from 31 services graduating from the learning programme
- helped a dance student at Sybil Elgar School achieve a place at the National Youth Dance company at Sadlers Wells
- supported Cathy Riggs, Head of Standards and Development at Helen Allison School to win an 'Inspirational educator award' from the Worshipful Company of Educators
- installed a new playground at Helen Allison School.



Next year we will:

- open the Anderson School in September and our Enterprise Campus in January
- develop our new Vanguard School in Lambeth ready for opening the following year
- launch our day service module approach to improve quality and consistency of the support we give to autistic adults

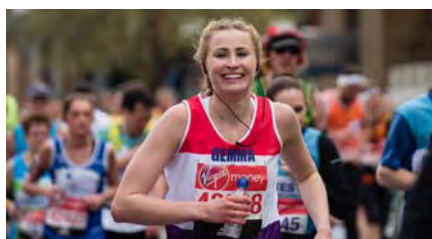
- enrol 290 staff in the NAS Academy
- open more supported living services to support autistic adults to grow and thrive in their community
- invest in our buildings so they are better equipped to provide more comfortable support settings
- support the Government's Transforming Care agenda by developing a service to support autistic people in hospital towards transition and greater independence.

Progressing behind the scenes

We couldn't help autistic people and their families in the ways we do without the crucial financial support our fundraisers, members and donors give our charity – as well as the hours our wonderful volunteers give us for free.

The key fundraising events we organised this year were:

- World Autism Awareness Week – £180,000 (including Night Walks – £90,000)
- Virgin Money London Marathon – £360,000 (best ever!)
- Abseil for Autism – £30,000
- All Aboard for Autism – almost £35,000 (best ever!)
- RideLondon – £70,000 (best ever!)



Membership

- 22,416 members at the end of the year
- 177 members and guests attended our AGM at the Museum of London

Volunteering

- Over 2,000 volunteers across our charity, including our Helpline, in our groups and branches and helping at our events.



Next year we will:

- roll out new Contact Centre software for our Autism Helpline, including telephone, SMS, email and live chat
- invest in new tools to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our marketing and communications service to the rest of the charity
- strengthen our induction process for new staff.

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 them, we would not be able to provide crucial support, information and advice to many thousands of autistic people, their families and friends.

ABF The Soldiers' Charity
Alinea Consulting
The Anderson Foundation
Aramco Overseas Company UK
Axcis Education Recruitment
Elizabeth Astor, Baroness Astor of Hever

Bank Workers Charity
Berni Charitable Trust
The Charities Aid Foundation
Charles and Alison McGregor
Charlotte Warner and Bruno Paulson
The City Bridge Trust
Claire Packer
Clarks
Clifford Chance LLP
The Co-operative Group
Colin and Helen David
Cullum Family Trust
The David and Claudia Harding Foundation
Dell EMC UK

Disney Theatrical Group
Drayton Manor
Exchange Chambers
Fidelity UK Foundation
The Edith Lilian Harrison 2000 Foundation
Roger and Kate Emerson
Sir Frank Lowe
The Hans & Julia Rausing Trust
Harper Macleod LLP
Sir Harvey and Lady McGrath
HelmsBriscoe
The Hilary Awdry Charitable Trust
Hugh Fraser Foundation
The Inge Wakehurst Trust
Lord Laidlaw
intu

Jane and Felix Posen
John and Marianne Swannell
Kilpatrick Fraser Charitable Trust
The Mabel Harper Charitable Trust
Marks and Spencer
Brian and Meredith Niles

MMA Education
Money.co.uk
MoneySuperMarket
Nick and Annette Mason
The Mulberry Trust
National Autistic Society Circle of Friends
Noriko Ogawa
Pears Foundation
The Progress Foundation
Prudential
The Rayne Foundation
Sainsbury's
Scottish Widows
Stavros Niarchos Foundation
Stella & Dot
Sumant Saraff and the Saraff Family Trust

Tangle Teezer
The Three Guineas Trust
International Foundation of Applied Disability Research (FIRAH) and the UEFA Foundation for Children
W&R Barnett

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:

BIG Lottery Young Start	£24,201 to run social groups for autistic people in Scotland
Big Lottery Fund Awards for All Northern Ireland	£9,939 from Awards for All Northern Ireland for 'NAS Juniors'
Big Lottery Fund Life Transitions	£75,096 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	£38,997 to expand our network of branches in Wales from 13 to 17 and enhance the support offered by the existing branches
Care Quality Commission	£20,531 as part of the 'Tell us about your care' partnership
Department for Education	£750,000 from the Department for Education towards the Autism Education Trust (AET). Our charity manages the AET on behalf of a coalition of autism partners
Department of Health	£35,600 from the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance
Scottish Government Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland	£90,492 from the Transforming Self-Management in Scotland Fund for NASplus

Strategic report

Part 2: Financial Review

Overview

The NAS Group in year results were positive with net incoming resources of £0.7m. The decrease on last year's figure of £1.3m is due to reductions in unrestricted income, primarily across our contracted services.

Our total free reserves (general and designated reserves) have reduced to £9.5m from £10m the previous year. The Trustees have chosen to increase the level of funds designated in the year to support the organisation's strategic plan to £4m from £3.1m. Our general reserves are £5.5m.

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 £97.3m, a decrease of £1.4m from last year. Expenditure has decreased by £0.7m to £96.6m. Overall income reduced due to vacancies in schools, reduced outreach contracts and the sale of our school in Bristol. In 2015-16, we also benefitted from a £1.1m profit on the sale of assets not replicated this financial year (£0.2m profit in 16-17).

- Fee income continues to be derived mainly from statutory bodies in relation to the delivery of services and remains at 83.8% (2015/16: 83.7%) of our total income.
- Unrestricted donations and legacies decreased by £0.6m to £5m. Restricted voluntary income remained steady at £3.5m.
- Overall, income from donations and gifts decreased by £0.4m to £5.9m, whilst income from grants (excluding NAS Academies Trust) reduced to £2.2m (2015/16: £2.3m) and legacy income decreased slightly to £0.2m (2015/16: £0.3m).
- We continued our investment in attracting new regular givers to the charity, spending £532k of direct expenditure in year. At the end of the financial year, the number of regular givers by direct debit had risen to 11,942. Since we commenced this programme of investment in 2011-12, the charity's gross annual income from individual giving has grown to £1.4m in 2016-17.
- We also made an investment of £99k in growing the size of the team participating in running events and fundraising on behalf of our charity, in particular in the Virgin Money London Marathon. This has resulted in the highest ever number of applicants by far for our charity places, the largest ever team running for our charity and the highest ever fundraising total for the Virgin Money London Marathon.
- Gross fundraised income was broadly in line with last year although net income was down slightly to £3.7m. This was slightly up on the forecast of £3.4m due to the timing of two large receipts from major donors.
- Individual giving was down slightly on forecast and prior year due in the main to higher than expected attrition rates.
- Donor acquisition investment was in line with forecast.
- Corporate funding is down on forecast due in the main to timing of receipts.
- Supporter fundraising finished the year better than expected due to higher levels of participation in a number of events.
- Although we did not see growth in our fundraising income during the year due to some of our more volatile income streams such as legacies, we continued to invest in those areas which will provide reliable, unrestricted income in the future, including individual giving and supporter fundraising. This strategy has delivered significant growth in recent years and we expect it to continue to do so, ensuring a greater degree of reliability and sustainability in our fundraising income.
- Income from other trading activities remained stable at £0.4m.
- Cash increased to £17.2m (2015/16: £13.1m) due to a significant reduction in our contracted services aged debt.

- Investment income remained the same due to low interest rates (£0.1m).
- Expenditure on charitable activities decreased to £93.7m (2015/16: £94.4m) as educational operations costs decreased in line with a drop in pupil numbers.
- Despite continued investment in our donor acquisition strategy, fundraising costs increased slightly from £2.9m last year to £3.2m.
- Staff costs accounted for 72% of our overall costs, a slight increase from 70% last year as we continue to work towards a strategy of paying the living wage.
- We purchased fixed assets valued at £1.3m in the year.
- Designated funds are higher at £4m (2015/16 £3.1m) 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 increased in year from £14.5m to £16.7m.

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 £65.7m to £60.4m mainly due to sale of the school in Bristol, lower student numbers and the continuing review of contracting arrangements with a small number of funding authorities resulting in a further transfer of service delivery to the charity.

- £55m was spent supporting autistic children and adults in our schools and services.

Pressure from local authorities seeking to reduce costs poses a major ongoing challenge for the company. Given that we continue to operate in a period of austerity, the Directors consider the results for the year and the position at the year-end to be satisfactory and in line with their three-year business plan.

Autism UK Ltd

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

- Turnover increased from £341k in 2015/16 to £367k this year mainly due to an increase in sponsorship.
- Costs have increased by £13k to £121k as a result of an increase in printing, mailing and warehousing costs primarily related to the increase in sponsorship activity.

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 (EFA) and contracted fees from local authorities.

- Grant income received from the EFA reduced from £1.2m to £0.4m as construction works on Church Lawton School in Cheshire were completed last year.

- Contracted income increased to £2.6m from £2.1m as the number of pupils grew in the year from 82 to 95 at the end of March 2017.
- Expenditure increased from £2.6m to £3.3m in line with 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 Chief Executive and approved by the Chair.

For the Chief Executive, 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 2017/18 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 Chief Executive on several work streams to identify efficiencies and growth opportunities to ensure the continued financial viability of our charity.

The charity has 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 charity throughout the year as well as an annual review as part of the strategic planning process. With general funds (risk reserve) slightly lower at £5.5m the charity is below the minimum risk reserve requirement set out in its Reserves policy but this takes into account our decision to set aside a further £0.9m in designations to enable improvements and growth within our operations.

The general reserves figure of £5.5m 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 of reduced income from fundraising activities on the charity's ability to deliver its charitable activities
- the impact of changing business needs on our property portfolio requiring significant property investment or divestment.

The Trustees have also included a local authority pension scheme reserve of £1m in the charity's designated reserves. Note 18 to the accounts details the amount of the fund and Note 24 provides additional information.

Reserves held at 31 March 2017 and 2016 (excluding pension reserves)

	2017 £000	2016 £000
Free reserves	5,541	6,895
General funds – designated	3,964	3,090
Restricted reserves	4,072	3,788
Designated funds – fixed assets	25,997	26,512
NAS Academies Trust reserves	9,418	8,526
Total reserves excluding pension reserve	48,991	48,811
Pension	(16,650)	(14,454)
Total reserves	32,342	34,357

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.

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 increased by £2.1m to £16.7m. This contrasts with a decrease last year of £2.4m and increase of £3.2m in 2014/15. 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 was expected that the revised basis for valuation brought in under FRS102 would minimise fluctuations in the actuarial valuation but this has not been the case.

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.

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

	2017 £m	2016 £m	2015 £m	2014 £m	2013 £m
Restricted reserves excluding NAS Academies Trust	4.1	3.8	3.9	4.3	4.4
Restricted funds NAS Academies Trust	9.4	8.4	7.7	4.4	0.1
Unrestricted reserves before pension funds deficit	35.5	36.5	35.5	35.5	35.4
FRS102 opening deficit on pension funds	(14.3)	(16.7)	(13.5)	(16.4)	(13.2)
Change in FRS102 pensions deficit in year	(2.4)	2.4	(3.3)	2.8	(3.2)
Reported total reserves as per balance sheet	32.3	34.4	30.3	30.6	23.5

Investment policy

Investment return and adequacy against policy

To make sure the charity 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, shares 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 2016/17.

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

As at 31 March 2017 the charity had £4m invested in one-year fixed rate bonds, £1.5m in three and six month bonds, a further £4.1m in corporate deposit accounts and the balance held in interest-bearing current accounts.





Handwriting practice sheet showing three rows of lowercase letters in a cursive script. The letters are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with each row starting with a dotted letter and followed by a solid letter. The letters are: n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z. The first row shows 'n' and 'o', the second row shows 'p' and 'q', and the third row shows 'r' and 's'. The letters are written in a cursive script, with each letter having a starting dot and a direction arrow. The letters are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with each row starting with a dotted letter and followed by a solid letter. The letters are: n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z.

Structure, governance and management

Our constitutional structure

The National Autistic Society, first **registered as a charity** in 1962, Charity No CR269425, was incorporated in 1975 as a **company limited by guarantee**, and registered in England and Wales, Company No 1205298.

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 22,000 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 of 31 March 2017 there were 114 branches 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 in 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 National Autistic 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 they stand down from the Board. Forum members are elected by National Autistic Society members in the region where 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.

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.

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 serving as 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 is not a Trustee. No Trustee has any financial interest in the charity or in its subsidiary companies. No Trustee receives any remuneration for their 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. Trustees may also attend 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 while they remain a Trustee.

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 Plans and Resources Committee acts on behalf of the Board to review staff pay and benefits with the committee's recommendations being considered by the full Board. This committee also oversees the objectives, performance appraisals and succession planning of the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.

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 Commercial; the Director of External Affairs

and Social Change; the Director, Scotland; the Director of Human Resources; the Director of IT; and the Director of Governance.

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.

We are a confident disability employer and as part of our commitment to diversity, we are keen to ensure we continue to promote a strong connection with people on the autism spectrum in all our recruitment and employment practices. We have strengthened the involvement of autistic people in staff recruitment and have reviewed 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 providing 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. A staff survey is undertaken each year and this helps to inform our priorities and policies to develop effective communications with our staff and to understand the key issues and priorities. For some years we have maintained an effective Staff Forum and this year we have also rolled out regional forums to

ensure that we can understand and be responsive to local staffing issues and suggestions.

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** hosted our annual Christmas concert, Stars Shine for Autism, at St Clement Danes church in London with the prestigious EC4 amateur choir. Jane also sat on the film judging panel for our first autism film and media awards, Autism Uncut. We thank her for her continued involvement in our charity's work.



Our Patron, HRH the Countess of Wessex

Key volunteers, staff and advisers



Patron: Her Royal Highness
The Countess of Wessex



President: Jane Asher

Vice Presidents:

Elizabeth, Baroness Astor of Haver
Dr Gillian Baird OBE MA, MB,
BChir, FRCP, DCH
Professor Simon Baron-Cohen
Rt Hon John Bercow, MP
Sally Bercow
Baroness Browning of Whimble
Peter Cullum CBE
Simon Cullum
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

We were sorry to learn of the death of Rebecca Daley, one of our Vice Presidents, during the course of the year. Rebecca made a huge contribution to the work of our charity, particularly through her work for fundraising. She is sadly missed.

Trustees:

Dr Carol Homden CBE,
Chair of Trustees
Krishnaswamy Murali, Vice Chair
Judy Berkowicz
Clare Beswick
Dr Sophie Castell
Felicity Chadwick-Histed
Stephen Davies
Peter Davis
(resigned November 2016)
Amanda Forshaw
(appointed March 2017)
David Harbott
Kevin Healey
(resigned August 2016)
Prof Sylvia Johnson
Elisa Menardo
(appointed July 2016)
Stewart Rapley
David Reeves
(appointed July 2016)
Pamela Reitemeier
Mike Stanton, National Forum
Chair

Chief Executive:
Mark Lever

Strategic Management Group:

Jacqui Ashton Smith, Education
Hannah Barnett, Adult Services
Kelly Evans, Finance
Alastair Graham, Fundraising
and Commercial
Paul Harper, Governance
Jane Harris, External Affairs and
Social Change and Clare Cox
(Interim)
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:

Fraser Brown, Solicitors,
84 Friar Lane, Nottingham,
NG1 6ED
Clifford Chance London,
10 Upper Bank Street,
London E14 5JJ
Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP,
134 Edmund Street,
Birmingham B3 2ES
Trowers & Hamlin London,
3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ
Stone King LLP,
Boundary House, 91 Charterhouse
Street, London EC1M 6HR

Company Secretary:

Paul Harper



Matthew Willmot and Carwyn Davies at Somerset House, Highbridge.

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 income 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 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 they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves 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 9 October 2017, 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 2017 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 27.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 2017 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 based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- 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; and
- the Trustees' Annual report and Strategic report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic report or the Trustees' Annual report.

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
- 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

9 November 2017

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 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
		2017 £'000	2017 £'000		2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Income and Endowments from						
Incoming from charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		24,457	1	2,570	27,028	27,915
Social and independent living support		54,528	-	-	54,528	54,691
Autism Expertise		129	-	-	129	272
Social Change and National Voice		112	-	-	112	77
Partner for Life		68	-	-	68	67
Supporting Professionals		3,993	-	-	3,993	3,515
Donations and legacies	3	5,025	3,489	1,533	10,047	10,323
Other trading activities	4	392	-	-	392	352
Investment income		105	3	3	111	107
Other Income	5	873	-	8	881	1,337
Total income		89,682	3,493	4,114	97,290	98,657
Expenditure on						
Raising funds		3,215	-	-		2,876
Expenditure on Charitable activities						
Striving for Excellence						
Education		23,430	120	3,252	26,802	27,247
Social and independent living support		52,211	684	-	52,895	53,813
Autism Expertise		2,316	126	-	2,442	2,727
Social Change and National Voice		2,059	714	-	2,773	2,362
Partner for Life		2,286	694	-	2,980	3,568
Supporting Professionals		4,590	871	-	5,461	4,717
Total expenditure	6	90,107	3,209	3,252	96,568	97,310
Net incoming / (expenditure)	7	(425)	284	862	723	1,347
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit schemes	24	(2,653)	-	(82)	(2,735)	2,692
Net movement in funds		(3,078)	284	780	(2,013)	4,039
Reconciliation of funds						
Funds brought forward	16-18	22,196	3,788	8,372	34,356	30,318
Fund balances carried forward	16-18	19,118	4,072	9,152	32,342	34,357

The net income for the financial year dealt with in the financial statements of the Parent Company was £0.5m (2016: £1.3m).
The notes on pages 36-62 form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2017

	Notes	Group 2017 £'000	Group 2016 £'000	Charity 2017 £'000	Charity 2016 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8	25,027	26,338	25,027	26,338
Tangible assets - NAS AT	8	7,597	7,314	-	-
		32,624	33,652	25,027	26,338
Current assets					
Stocks		82	114	82	114
Debtors	11	10,378	12,921	8,454	11,078
Cash deposits		13,728	10,493	13,728	10,493
Cash at bank and in hand		1,436	1,133	1,437	1,118
Cash at bank and in hand - NAS AT		2,040	1,454	-	-
		27,664	26,115	23,701	22,803
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	11,082	9,102	8,942	7,002
Net current assets		16,582	17,013	14,759	15,801
Total assets less current liabilities		49,206	50,665	39,786	42,139
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	14-15	212	1,854	212	1,854
Net assets excluding pension liabilities		48,994	48,811	39,574	40,285
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS	24	(16,384)	(14,299)	(16,384)	(14,299)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities - NAS AT	24	(266)	(155)	-	-
Net assets including pension liabilities		32,342	34,357	23,190	25,986
Funds					
Restricted funds	16	4,072	3,788	4,072	3,788
NAS Academies Trust	17				
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds		7,501	7,314	-	-
Restricted Funds		1,917	1,212	-	-
Pension reserve - NAS AT		(266)	(155)	-	-
		9,152	8,372	-	-
Unrestricted funds:	18				
Designated funds - fixed assets		25,997	26,831	25,997	26,831
Designated funds - other		3,964	3,090	3,964	3,090
General fund		5,541	6,895	5,541	6,895
Revaluation reserve		-	(319)	-	(319)
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liabilities		35,502	36,497	35,502	36,497
Pension reserve	18	(16,384)	(14,299)	(16,384)	(14,299)
Unrestricted funds including pension liabilities		19,118	22,198	19,118	22,198
Total funds	19	32,342	34,357	23,190	25,986

The net income for the financial year dealt with in the financial statements of the Parent Company was £0.5m (2016: £1.3m).

The notes on pages 36-62 form part of these financial statements. Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 9 October 2017 and signed on their behalf Dr Carol Homden CBE, Chair of Trustees.

Consolidated cashflow statement

Year ended 31 March 2017

	Notes	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	1	4,954	(318)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	2	(525)	59
Net cash (used) in financing activities	3	(304)	(298)
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		4,125	(557)
Net cash resources at 1 April		13,080	13,637
Net cash resources at 31 March		17,205	13,080
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		4,125	(557)
1. Reconciliation of net incoming resources to net cash inflow from operating activities		2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Net income for the reporting period		723	1,349
Interest from investments		(111)	(107)
Depreciation charges		1,874	1,996
(Profit) on sale of fixed assets		(195)	(1,147)
Decrease in stock		32	18
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors (excl interest receivable)		2,528	(3,539)
Increase in creditors (excluding adjustment from movement in LT creditor to CL)		642	865
(Decrease)/Increase in pension liability		(539)	249
Net cash provided by / used in operating activities		4,954	(318)
2. Cash flows from investing activities		2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Opening debtor balance		(18)	(33)
Interest income on cash deposits		111	107
Closing debtor		33	18
Net cash provided by investing activities		126	92
Purchases of property, plant and equipment		(1,251)	(1,318)
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets		600	1,285
Net cash (used in) acquiring assets		(651)	(33)
Net cash (used in) / provided by investing activities		(525)	59
3. Cash flows from financing activities		2017 £'000	2016 £'000
New loans		-	-
Repayment of interest free loan		(6)	-
Repayment of City Road purchase loan		(298)	(298)
Net cash (used in) financing activities		(304)	(298)
4. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		£'000	£'000
Cash in hand		7,190	5,577
Notice deposit (less than 3 months)		10,015	7,503
Total cash and cash equivalents		17,205	13,080

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 20. The particular accounting policies adopted by the Trustees apply to The National Autistic Society and all its subsidiaries unless stated otherwise and these policies are described below.

The National Autistic Society meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102.

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*.

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 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 it is receivable and any unspent amount is reflected as a balance of The National Autistic Society 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 lease
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

The National Autistic Society 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 and accrual.

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 and 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 ongoing 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 £720k.

Pension contributions

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

Defined contribution pension scheme

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

Defined benefit pension schemes

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

Teachers' pension scheme

The National Autistic Society contributes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (the TPS) at rates set by the TPS actuary and advised to Council by the TPS administrator. It is a multi-employer pension scheme and it is not possible to identify the assets and liabilities of the TPS which are attributable to the charity. In accordance with FRS102 the TPS is therefore accounted for as a defined contribution scheme.

Related parties

In accordance with the provisions of FRS102, the charity discloses material transactions with related parties in the notes to the accounts. See Notes 10 and 23 for further details.

Operating leases

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

3. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2017	2017	2017	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
					Restated
Donations and gifts	4,651	1,243	15	5,910	6,414
Legacies	199	-	-	199	319
Grants - Revenue	174	2,246	1,067	3,487	3,371
Grants - Capital	-	-	451	451	219
Total	5,025	3,490	1,533	10,047	10,323

During 2016-17, funds received from the EFA including capital were £1,518m (2016: £1,126m). No other form of assistance was received from them.

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 charity 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 advisers, Trustees and councillors. In accordance with FRS102 and the Charities SORP (FRS102), the economic contribution is not recognised in the accounts.

During 2016-17, The National Autistic Society also received other grants from other government departments. This is listed in the 'Thank You' section of the Annual report.

4. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2017	2017	2017	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming resources					
Sponsorships	222	-	-	222	185
Christmas cards	142	-	-	142	151
Other	28	-	-	28	16
Total	392	-	-	392	352
Resources expended					
Christmas cards	113	-	-	113	98
Total	113	-	-	113	98

5. Other income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	NAS AT Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2017	2017	2017	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Incoming resources					
Surplus on sale of assets	208	-	-	208	1,149
Other	665	-	8	673	188
Total	873	-	8	881	1,337

6. Analysis of expenditure

	Direct Costs 2017 £'000	Support Costs 2017 £'000	Total Costs 2017 £'000	Total Costs 2016 £'000
Cost of raising funds	2,996	220	3,216	2,876
Charitable expenditure				
Striving for Excellence:				
Education	24,903	1,898	26,801	27,247
Social and independent living support	49,107	3,788	52,895	53,813
Autism Expertise	2,108	334	2,442	2,727
Social Change and National Voice	2,638	135	2,773	2,361
Partner for Life	2,785	195	2,980	3,567
Supporting Professionals	5,149	312	5,461	4,719
Total expenditure	89,686	6,882	96,568	97,310

Support costs are made up of:	Costs of raising funds £'000	Education £'000	Social and independent living support £'000	Autism Expertise £'000	Social Change and National Voice £'000	Partner for Life £'000	Supporting Professionals £'000	Total £'000
Human resources	7	160	347	14	6	11	14	559
Information technology	134	703	1,162	288	89	133	208	2,717
Finance and business services	52	685	1,507	22	26	33	60	2,385
Chief executive, governance and quality assurance	11	140	307	4	5	7	12	486
Marketing and customer relations management	15	195	429	6	7	9	17	679
Chief Operating Officer	1	16	35	1	1	1	1	55
Total	220	1,898	3,788	334	135	195	312	6,882

Governance cost included in support costs was £242k (2016: £271k)

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
	2017 £'000	2017 £'000	2017 £'000	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Company Secretary	82	-	-	82	100
Internal audit	43	-	-	43	67
Meeting expenses	6	-	-	6	28
External audit	52	-	23	75	60
Trustees' expenses	21	-	15	36	17
Total	204	-	38	242	272

7. Net incoming/(outgoing) resources

	Group		Charity	
	2017 £'000	2016 £'000	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year are stated after charging:				
Auditor's remuneration:				
Statutory audits				
– current year	55	55	44	44
– prior year	20	4	3	4
Other services:				
Taxation and Advisory	33	33	31	31
Depreciation:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,874	1,998	1,874	1,998
Profit/loss on disposal of fixed assets:				
Profit/ Loss on disposal	208	1,143	208	1,143
Operating lease rentals:				
Rent payable on properties	2,486	2,448	2,486	2,448
Hire of equipment	105	149	105	149
Hire of vehicles	866	788	866	788

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 2016	31,424	9,467	2,060	197	5,451	265	48,864
Additions	46	165	349	-	177	514	1,251
Disposals	(409)	-	(177)	-	(175)	-	(761)
Transfers for year	-	72	52	-	130	(254)	-
As at 31 March 2017	31,061	9,704	2,283	197	5,583	525	49,354
Accumulated depreciation							
As at 1 April 2016	6,222	3,147	981	179	4,682	-	15,211
Charge for year	580	332	443	8	512	-	1,874
Released on disposals	(82)	-	(133)	-	(141)	-	(356)
As at 31 March 2017	6,720	3,479	1,291	187	5,053	-	16,730
Net book value							
As at 1 April 2016	25,202	6,321	1,078	18	769	265	33,653
As at 31 March 2017	24,341	6,225	992	10	530	525	32,624
Included in above NBV of NAS AT assets							
As at 1 April 2016	3,762	3,314	47	3	188	-	7,314
Additions in the year	46	-	104	-	16	-	165
Transfers for year	-	382	-	-	-	-	382
Depreciation charged in the year	(70)	(68)	(34)	(2)	(92)	-	(265)
As at 31 March 2017	3,738	3,629	118	1	112	-	7,597

Freehold properties include land at cost of **£2,953,791** (2016: £2,983,791).

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

	2017 £	2016 £
NAS Services Ltd		
The Society owns all of the share capital of NAS Services Ltd, a company registered in England and Wales (No 2757062), 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 and Wales (No 3133559), 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 and Wales.		
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

All subsidiary companies have the same registered office as the parent as shown in Note 1.

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
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Turnover	32,447	29,392	4,114	3,271	60,362	65,654	367	341
Gift aid income from subsidiaries	5,682	6,321	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operating charges	(38,271)	(35,030)	(3,252)	(2,607)	(54,926)	(59,565)	(109)	(97)
(Loss)/Surplus	(142)	683	862	664	5,436	6,089	258	244
Administration and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	(12)	(13)

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
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Surplus/(Deficit) before actuarial (Losses)/Gains	(142)	683	862	664	5,436	6,089	246	231
Actuarial (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	(2,653)	2,641	(82)	51	-	-	-	-
Amount covenanted to the charity	-	-	-	-	(5,436)	(6,089)	(246)	(265)
Retained (deficit) / surplus for the year	(2,795)	3,324	780	715	-	-	-	(34)

The net current assets and share capital and reserves for both NAS Services Limited company registered in England and Wales (No 2757062) and Autism UK Limited company registered in England and Wales (No 3133559) as of 31 March 2017 was £2, representing the share capital in each company (2016: £2 for NAS Services Limited and £2k for Autism UK Limited). Both companies have the same registered office as the parent as shown in Note 1.

The net assets for the NAS Academies Trust as at 31 March 2017 were £9,152k (2016: £8,372k).

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 and Wales (No 07954396) on 17 February 2012. Its charitable purpose relates to the advancement of education for the public benefit; it is not autism exclusive.

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.

	2017	2016
NAS Services Ltd	5,436	6,089
Autism UK Ltd	246	265

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 £129k (2016: £107k) in finance, payroll & HR support, IT Support, project management and marketing services from the charity.

11. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Trade debtors	7,232	10,208	5,037	2,497
Other debtors	177	137	177	137
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	-	1,503	6,922
Prepayments and accrued income	2,969	2,576	1,737	1,522
Total	10,378	12,921	8,454	11,078

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Loans repayable	1,636	298	1,636	297
Trade creditors	4,115	2,927	2,799	1,429
Corporation tax payable	-	8	-	-
Taxation and social security	338	174	380	224
Accruals and provisions	3,642	4,524	3,399	4,247
Fees invoiced in advance and deferred income	1,351	1,172	727	806
Total	11,082	9,103	8,942	7,002

13. Deferred income

Deferred income relates to advance booking on conferences, employment, diagnostic and early bird training and income received in advance for a deferred project.

	Group	Charity
	2017	2017
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April 2016	854	841
Amounts released in year	(546)	(546)
Amounts deferred in year	109	109
Balance as at 31 March 2017	417	405

13a. TPS Provision

In 2014-2015, the Trustees set aside a provision of £1,077m in respect of additional expected pension costs.

	Group	Charity
	2017	2017
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April 2016	1,077	1,077
Amounts released in year	(357)	(357)
Amounts deferred in year	-	-
Balance as at 31 March 2017	720	720

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

	Group		Charity	
	2017 £'000	2016 £'000	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Interest free mortgage (Note a)	200	200	200	200
City Road loan (Note b)	-	1,636	-	1,636
Trafigura loan (Note c)	12	18	12	18
Total	212	1,854	212	1,854

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

Note b: 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. Loans

The loans shown in Note 12 and 14 are repayable as follows:

	Group		Charity	
	2017 £'000	2016 £'000	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
City Road loan				
Instalments falling due in less than one year	1,636	297	1,636	297
Instalments falling due between two and five years	-	1,339	-	1,339
Total	1,636	1,636	1,636	1,636
Trafigura interest free loan				
Instalments falling due in less than one year	-	-	-	-
Instalments falling due between two and five years	12	18	12	18
Total	12	18	12	18
Loans due after five years and not repayable by instalment:				
Interest free mortgages	200	200	200	200
Total	1,848	1,854	212	1,854

16. Movement on restricted funds

	Balance 1 April 2016	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31 March 2017
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Striving for Excellence:				
Education	1,622	118	(120)	1,620
Social and independent living support	899	626	(684)	841
Autism Expertise	46	273	(126)	193
Social Change and National Voice	863	687	(714)	836
Partner for Life	344	827	(694)	477
Supporting Professionals	13	963	(871)	105
Total	3,787	3,494	(3,209)	4,072

There are no significant individual restricted funds with balances of over £200,000 as at 31 March 2017.

2015-16 Comparatives	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 and 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

Big Lottery Funding

	Balance 1 April 2016	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31 March 2017
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
GLS08 Moving Forward Befriending BLF	5	75	80	-
DAL18 Empowering Families Big Lottery	12	5	17	-
BHW01 Big Lottery-Wales Branch Support	25	39	39	25
NIR09 NAS Juniors Project NI	-	10	2	8
Total	42	129	138	33

Big Lottery Funding 2015-16 Comparatives

	Balance 1 April 2015	Income	Expenditure	Balance 31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
GLS08 Moving Forward Befriending BLF	49	136	181	5
DAL18 Empowering Families Big Lottery	18	22	28	12
BHW01 Big Lottery-Wales Branch Support	8	38	21	25
SCN29 Young Campaigners	2	37	39	-
Total	78	233	269	41

17. NAS Academies Trust

	Balance 1 April 2016	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Actuarial losses	Balance 31 March 2017
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Restricted Fixed Assets Funds	7,314	451	(265)	-	-	7,501
Restricted Revenue Grants	1,212	3,663	(2,958)	-	-	1,917
Pension Reserve	(155)	-	(29)	-	(82)	(266)
Total	8,371	4,114	(3,252)	-	(82)	9,152

2015-16 Comparatives

	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 2016	Income	Expenditure	Capital transfers	Actuarial losses	Other transfers	Balance 31 March 2017
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General fund	6,894	89,473	(88,604)	(578)	-	(1,644)	5,541
Designated funds:							
Fixed assets	26,831	208	(1,620)	578	-	-	25,997
Property related growth and developments in Schools and Adult Services	400	-	(19)	-	-	99	480
IT Strategy Development	500	-	-	-	-	400	900
Enterprise Activity Fund	100	-	-	-	-	(100)	-
Autism Education Trust	244	-	-	-	-	-	244
Web, CRM and Content Development	175	-	(34)	-	-	(141)	-
Donor Acquisition	670	-	(398)	-	-	128	400
Digital and brand	-	-	-	-	-	121	121
Enterprise Campus	-	-	-	-	-	818	818
Local Authority Pension Scheme Reserve	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Total Designated Funds							
exc Fixed Assets	3,090	-	(451)	-	-	1,325	3,964
Revaluation fund	(319)	-	-	-	-	319	-
Total unrestricted funds							
excluding pension reserve	36,496	89,681	(90,676)	-	-	1,644	35,501
Pension reserve	(14,299)	-	568	-	(2,653)	-	(16,384)
Total unrestricted funds	22,198	89,681	(90,108)	-	(2,653)	-	19,118

18. Movement on unrestricted funds continued

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 defined 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.
IT Strategy Development	To support the development and roll-out of the new IT strategy over the next financial year including the implementation of a new digital care management system and a review of back office systems.
Autism Education Trust	To fund the ongoing development of the work of the Autism Education Trust in addition to that funded by the DfE.
Donor Acquisition	To fund further investment in the donor acquisition programme to generate future additional unrestricted income.
Digital and brand	To fund investment in our digital services and improve our brand in supporting and promoting our strategy and vision.
Enterprise Campus	To underwrite the costs of opening the new Anderson School, Lorna Wing Assessment Centre and Enterprise unit at the new Enterprise Campus.
LGPS reserve	To underwrite the contingent liability relating to a Section 75 debt in the Somerset LGPS.
Pension Reserve	Represents the theoretical deficit on the defined benefit pension schemes as calculated using FRS102 methodology. See Note 24 for further details.

Designated funds no longer required

Enterprise Activity Fund	To underwrite the start up of new, sustainable small enterprise initiatives in 2016-17. No further funding in 2017-18.
Web, CRM and Content Development	To fund the development of The National Autistic Society website and CRM to support the delivery of The National Autistic Society strategy. Initial work completed in 2016-17 and replaced by new Digital and Brand designation in 2017.
Revaluation fund	This fund set aside the loss on the value of the ex Hayes Hospital property as measured at the end of the accounting period 2009-10. The building was brought back into use in 2012 as the Anderson School. The school was sold in September 2016 and the reserve released.

2015-16 Comparatives

	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
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)	-	-	-	244
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 unrestricted 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

19. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2017 £'000	Restricted funds 2017 £'000	NAS AT Restricted funds 2017 £'000	Total funds 2017 £'000
Fixed assets	23,424	1,602	7,596	32,623
Net current assets	12,278	2,482	1,822	16,583
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(200)	(12)	-	(213)
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities	(16,384)	-	(266)	(16,650)
Net assets including pension liabilities	19,118	4,072	9,152	32,343

19. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds continued

2015-16 Comparatives	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	NAS AT Restricted funds	Total funds
	2016	2016	2016	2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets	24,838	1,501	7,313	33,653
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	22,198	3,788	8,372	34,357

20. Operating lease commitments

Lease Note

Minimum lease payments in respect of operating leases were:

	Property		Other leases	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Operating leases which expire:				
Not later than one year	2,118	2,060	755	752
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,600	7,373	1,201	1,188
Later than five years	10,717	11,697	-	-
	20,435	21,130	1,956	1,940

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

In 2016-17 payment on operating leases was £3,457 (2016: £3,385)

21. Capital commitments

Committed building projects are:	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000
Ongoing projects		
NAS AT		
Thames Valley School	-	17
Church Lawton School	51	58
Vanguard School	100	-
	151	75
Total committed	151	75

No funds are required to be set aside for National Autistic Society 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:

	2017 FTE	2016 FTE (restated)
Footing the Bill	27	26
Striving for Excellence:		
Education	792	776
Social and independent living support	1,917	1,882
Autism Expertise	37	23
Social Change and National Voice	25	27
Partner for Life	61	68
Supporting Professionals	60	58
Behind the scenes	113	122
Total	3,032	2,982

The average number of employed staff in the year was 3,452 (2016: 3,509).

Staff costs comprise:	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Gross wages and salaries	57,253	56,633
Agency staff	5,810	5,793
Social security costs	4,262	4,036
Pension costs	1,867	1,847
Total	69,192	68,309

During the year, £161k was paid out in redundancy and £104k in ex-gratia 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	2017 Number	2016 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	9	10
£70,001 - £80,000	6	10
£80,001 - £90,000	5	2
£90,001 - £100,000	2	1
£100,001 - £110,000	-	1
£120,001 - £130,000	-	1
£130,001 - £140,000	1	1
£140,001 - £150,000	1	-
Total	24	26

23. Information regarding employees and Trustees

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

	2017 Number	2016 Number
Defined contribution schemes:		
The National Autistic Society Stakeholder Scheme	11	15
Defined benefit schemes:		
Brent Pension Scheme	2	-
Teachers' Pension Scheme	10	10
Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme	1	1
Total	24	26
	£'000	£'000
National Autistic Society contribution was:		
Defined contribution schemes	50	63
Defined benefit schemes	172	139
Total	222	202

Further details of all National Autistic Society pension schemes are shown in Note 24.

The senior management team is made up of 10 Directors led by the Chief Executive. The employment benefit of the team was £964k (2016 restated: £988k).

No Trustee or person related or connected by business to them, has received any remuneration from the charity during the year (2016: none).

33 Trustees and National Forum members were reimbursed expenses during the year totalling £12,566. Out of this total, £270 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 £29,112 (2016: £28,461) 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.

There were no related party transactions in the year other than the inter-company transaction disclosed in Note 10.

24. Pension commitments

The National Autistic Society 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 National Autistic Society participates in the schemes which provide defined benefits, based on members' final pensionable salary.

Alongside the above pension schemes, The National Autistic Society 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 National Autistic Society are eligible for membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, which is a national, statutory contributory, unfunded defined benefit scheme administered by the Teachers' Pension Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education and Skills. Pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of the Government Actuary. The National Autistic Society has 68 active members of the scheme (2016: 56 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 £507,291 (2016: £383,240).

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme.

Teaching staff employed by The National Autistic Society 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 National Autistic Society has six active members of the scheme (2016: eight active members). Employer's contributions in the year totalled £99,384 (2016: £61,309).

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 2017 are estimated to be £823,000.

Assumptions

Brent Scheme. The latest actuarial valuation of The National Autistic Society's liabilities took place as at 31 March 2017. 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	2017 %pa	2016 %pa
Rate of general increase in salaries	2.7	4.0
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.4	2.2
Discount rate	2.6	3.5

24. Pension commitments continued

Principal demographic assumptions:

Brent Scheme	31 March 2017	31 March 2016	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	Males	Males	Females	Females
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 65)	22.3	22.0	24.5	24.3
Future lifetime from age 65 (currently aged 45)	24.1	24.4	26.4	26.8

Life expectancy is based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2013 model assuming the current rate of improvement has reached a peak and will converge to a long term rate of 1.25%. Average rate expectancy is summarised above.

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet

Brent Scheme	31 March 2017 £'000	31 March 2016 £'000
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	14,140	12,453
Present value of liabilities	28,664	25,098
Net pension (liabilities)	(14,524)	(12,645)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2017 £'000	31 March 2016 £'000
Period ending		
Current service cost	349	416
Interest cost	872	870
Expected return on assets	(438)	(400)
Settlement cost	783	-
Expense recognised on SOFA	783	886

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Opening present value of liabilities	25,098	27,174
Current service cost	349	416
Interest cost	872	870
Contribution by participants	81	86
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	3,050	(2,952)
Estimated benefits paid out	(786)	(496)
Net increase in liabilities from disposals and acquisitions	-	-
Settlements	-	-
Closing present value of liabilities	28,664	25,098

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	12,453	12,301
Expected return on assets	438	400
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	1,131	(638)
Contribution by employers	823	800
Contribution by participants	81	86
Net benefits paid out	(786)	(496)
Closing fair value of assets	14,140	12,453

	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Expected return on assets	438	400
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	1,131	(638)
Actual return on assets	1,569	(238)

Analysis of amounts recognised as other gains and losses	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Total actuarial gains / (losses)	(1,919)	2,314
Total losses in Statement of Financial Activities	(1,919)	2,314

Projected pension expense for the period to 31 March 2018

	£'000
Projected Current service cost	(491)
Total Service Cost	(491)
Interest income on plan assets	370
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(742)
Total Net Interest Cost	(372)
Total Included in Statement of Financial Activities	(863)

The current service cost includes an allowance for administration expenses of 0.7% of payroll. The monetary value is based on a projected payroll of £1,220,000.

The employer's contributions for the period to 31 March 2018 will be approximately £893,000.

24. Pension commitments continued

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 £94,337 (2016: £47,885). 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 2017 are estimated to be £106,000.

Principal financial assumptions	31 March	31 March
	2017	2016
	%pa	%pa
Inflation RPI	3.6	3.4
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.2	4.3
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.7	2.5
Discount rate	2.8	3.9

* The assumptions are set with reference to market conditions at 31 March 2017. 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	31 March	31 March	31 March
	2017	2017	2016	2016
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Retiring today	23.0	25.0	22.9	26.2
Retiring in 20 years	25.1	27.4	25.2	28.6

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 2016 for the year to 31 March 2017). 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 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	217	184
Present value of liabilities	483	339
Net pension (liabilities)	(266)	(155)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Period ending		
Service cost	131	76
Net interest on the defined liability (asset)	4	6
Expense recognised on SOFA	135	82

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Period ending	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
Opening present value of liabilities	339	295
Current service cost	131	76
Interest cost	14	11
Change in financial assumptions	161	(59)
Change in demographic assumptions	(3)	-
Experience loss/(gain) on defined benefit obligation	(193)	-
Contributions by scheme payments	34	16
Closing present value of liabilities	483	339

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	184	127
Interest on assets	10	5
Return on assets less interest	28	(8)
Other actuarial gains/(losses)	(145)	-
Contribution by employers	106	44
Contribution by participants	34	16
Closing fair value of assets	217	184

Actual return on assets

Interest on assets	10	5
Return on assets less interest	28	(8)
Actual return on assets	38	(3)

Analysis of amounts recognised as other gains and losses

Total actuarial gains / (losses)	(82)	51
Total losses in Statement of Financial Activities	(82)	51

*STRGL (statement of total recognised gains and losses)

24. Pension commitments continued

Somerset Scheme

Contributions: The employer's regular contributions to the Somerset Scheme for the accounting period to 31 March 2017 are estimated to be £51,000.

Principal financial assumptions	31 March	31 March
	2017	2016
	%pa	%pa
Inflation	3.5	3.2
Rate of general increase in salaries	4.1	4.1
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.6	2.3
Discount rate	2.6	3.6

Our estimate of the duration of the employer's liabilities is 16 years.

*The discount rate is the yield at the 16 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	31 March	31 March	31 March
	2017	2017	2016	2016
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Retiring today	23.9	25.0	23.8	26.2
Retiring in 20 years	26.1	27.4	26.1	28.5

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.

Reconciliation funded status to balance sheet	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Value as at:		
Notional value of assets	3,337	2,795
Present value of liabilities	5,197	4,449
Net pension (liabilities)	(1,860)	(1,654)

Analysis of income and expenditure	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000
Period ending		
Current service cost	49	55
Interest cost	158	153
Expected return on assets	(684)	(27)
Expense recognised on SOFA	(477)	181

Changes to the present value of liabilities during the accounting period

Period ending	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
Opening present value of liabilities	4,449	4,696
Current service cost	49	55
Interest cost	158	153
Contribution by participants	9	10
Change in financial assumptions	874	(329)
Change in demographic assumptions	-	-
Experience loss/(gain) on defined benefit obligation	(106)	-
Net benefits paid out	(158)	(136)
Closing present value of liabilities	5,275	4,449

Changes to the fair value of assets during the accounting period

Opening fair value of assets	2,795	2,840
Expected return on assets	684	27
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(42)	-
Administration expenses	(2)	(2)
Contribution by employers	51	56
Contribution by participants	9	10
Net benefits paid out	(158)	(136)
Closing fair value of assets	3,337	2,795

Actual return on assets

Expected return on assets	684	27
Actuarial (losses)/gains on assets	(42)	(2)
Actual return on assets	642	25

Analysis of amounts recognised as other gains and losses

Net assets (defined liability)	(147)	263
Total losses in Statement of Financial Activities	(147)	263

24. Pension commitments continued

Defined contribution scheme

Scottish Widows Group Personal Pension Scheme. This group personal pension scheme is The National Autistic Society's main scheme, comprising auto-enrolment and enhanced schemes. The scheme is administered by Scottish Widows. There are currently 1,931 active members in auto-enrolment and 381 active members in our enhanced scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of The National Autistic Society. Pension costs charged in the SOFA represent the contributions payable by The National Autistic Society in the year. Employer's contribution for the year totalled £867,889.

TPS Pension Provision

The Trustees hold a provision of £720K (2016: £1,077k) in the accounts for additional pension costs. Note 13a refers to this.

25. Contingent liability

Defined benefit pension scheme

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 National Autistic Society 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 a sum of £1.0m was set aside. Note 15 refers.

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

Sleep-in

As at the date of this Annual report, The National Autistic Society is engaged in clarifying the law around applying average national living wage (NLW) to non-contractual sleep-in hours for our support workers. While The National Autistic Society has ensured that payments going forward meet the latest case law interpretation of NLW requirements, the current legal proceedings concern a potential liability for historic payments. This could involve a significant number of staff over a six year period. Due to the uncertainty over the final outcome of the ongoing legal proceedings and limitations over the ability to assess and reliably measure the value of potential liabilities, no provision has been recognised within the financial statements and it is presently impracticable to estimate the potential financial effect.

26. Financial instruments

At the balance sheet date the consolidated group held financial assets at amortised cost and short term deposits comprising cash and short term deposits, trade debtors, other debtors and accrued income of £26,684k (2016: £25,117k) and financial liabilities at amortised cost, comprising leases, trade and other creditors and accruals of £9,828k (2016: £9,215k). Total interest income received in respect of financial assets held at amortised cost totalled £111k (2016: £107k).

27. Post balance sheet events

Subsequent to the year end, on 31 July 2017 the charity acquired the free hold of the Luxborough Lane Enterprise Campus in Chigwell, Essex for £6m, comprising a new purpose built school and associated land.



“When Samuel was first diagnosed, we came across The National Autistic Society. The information and advice we have since received has been amazing. We’ve learned new ways to communicate with our boys, and find the website invaluable.”

Helen

The National Autistic Society is here to transform lives, challenge attitudes and build a society that works for autistic people.

We transform lives by being a trusted source of support and practical advice for autistic children and adults, as well as their families and carers. We challenge perceptions by campaigning through our national branches and working with businesses and policy-makers to change laws and deliver better services.

Since 1962, we have made progress on both fronts, but we know there is much more to do, because the status quo isn’t good enough for autistic people. With your support, we can change it.

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