

## **BOLTON ADULT ASPERGER SUPPORT**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2014**

#### **Item 5. Chairman's Report**

Much has happened since our first Annual General meeting in July 2013. Since that time we have been extremely busy building our relationships with like-minded voluntary groups, charitable organisations and statutory organisations. We have, at almost all of our monthly meetings enjoyed the company of and benefited from the knowledge and experience of various speakers on a range of topics pertinent to the personal development and ongoing improvement of the welfare of our children, which in turn has helped to ease the burden of anxiety for our parent/carer members.

As is often the case with any new organisation, a priority for the group has been the need to develop knowledge of our existence within the town and, as far as possible, throughout Greater Manchester also. One of our main tasks in this has been the development of our own website, which, with the guiding assistance and expertise of Luxson, our website developers and with the generous support of Bolton Council we successfully achieved in early October. Important also has been the need to engage proactively with other local organisations from whom we have been able to learn a great deal and to obtain the necessary grant aid in order to ensure we have the resources - albeit modest – to provide a spring-board to longer term sustainability. In this regard also particular gratitude is extended to the staff and volunteers of Bolton CVS who have provided and continue to provide outstanding support and guidance.

In October we were privileged to be able to take part in Bolton CVS's Annual General Meeting held at the Macron Stadium (better known still to most of us as the Reebok Stadium). At this event we were able to mount a credible display with the aid of newly acquired Pop-up banners and printed literature purchased with grant aid from Bolton Council.

We have been represented at various events by members of committee, including events at which our members, by invitation, have been able to share their individual experiences with Health Professionals regarding the challenges they have faced in raising their (now adult) children with Asperger Syndrome and other severely challenging behaviours. Attendances at these events are scheduled to continue well into 2015.

We successfully launched our Drop-in facility for parents/carers at the conveniently located Commerce House at Bridgeman Place in the town Centre, a facility afforded us by kind invitation of Ants Junction. These monthly meetings that take place in the afternoon of the last Saturday of each month give parents/carers the opportunity to meet together in a most informal but confidential setting and thus are able to share experiences over a coffee and cake. These informal meetings take place at the same time that our adult children enjoy the safe and stimulating get-togethers under the guidance and safety of Breaking Barriers/ABAG.

Looking forward to the coming months we realise there are many challenges facing the group, not least the successful transition to Charitable Status, the securing of further grant aid, the need to increase our membership and the need to continue developing partnerships with other organisations for the benefit of all adults (18 plus) who have AS whether diagnosed or not.

I take this opportunity to thank fellow committee members for their continuing loyal support and also the many organisations, both Statutory and non-statutory for their generosity and support over the past 16 months. We look forward to another eventful and rewarding year in which we can bring comfort and support to many more wonderful parents and carers of adult children who are on the Autism Spectrum.

Our genuine gratitude goes to the following:

Bolton Council – Staff of the Department for Children’s and Adult Services  
Bolton Council- Staff of the Printing Services Department  
Bolton Community and Voluntary Services  
Bolton Carers Support  
Staff and Volunteers Thicketford Care and Community Centre  
National Autistic Society  
Greater Manchester Autism Consortium  
Greater Manchester West Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust  
Greater Manchester Police  
Breaking Barriers  
Ants Junction  
Luxson  
ASGMA  
BSS Coaches  
Irwin Mitchell – Solicitors  
Pannone – Solicitors

BAAS/AGMCR/14