

BOLTON ADULT AUTISM SUPPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOVEMBER 29th 2017

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It hardly seems twelve months since I prepared my last Chairman's report and as I reflect upon the past twelve months I realise that much of what we have achieved has been as a result of those members who have given much support and encouragement, not only to me and the Vice Chair but to each other.

The year started with our seeking sources of funding for our Befriending service and for core needs. We were successful in obtaining a sum of money from The National Lottery (Awards4All) for the recruitment of volunteers and associated expenses but sadly not for the recruitment of a volunteers' Co-ordinator. At this time of writing we are in the process of seeking volunteers with a view to their training being delivered early in the New Year. I made reference last year to the difficulty of obtaining funding and this year's efforts prove the situation is becoming even harder and this is borne out by the experiences of other Bolton based charities and voluntary organisations. However, we will not become too despondent but will continue to think of ways to operate imaginatively in a climate of seemingly dwindling resources.

Notwithstanding the foregoing we were extremely grateful to be invited on 17th March to receive a cheque to the value of £130.00 from the President of Bolton Lever Rotary Club and early in the next financial year we are expecting a donation from a Bolton based business.

Also early in the year we advertised for a volunteer to take on the duties Honorary Treasurer following the resignation of Martin Farrar from this post due to ill health. After interview, we were happy to appoint Anna Polichnowska to this important post and we look forward to Anna having a long and fruitful association with BAAS.

One of our more pleasant and rewarding tasks this year was to provide a number of carers trips that once more gave parents and carers the opportunity for respite from the taxing duties they face each and every day. These trips without a doubt contribute enormously to the maintenance of people's wellbeing and again we are indebted to Bolton CVS for providing the initial funding that enabled us to organise a number of visits to venues both far and near.

I am pleased to report also that this year we were joined at our meetings by a number of excellent guest speakers sharing research on a number of topics related to Autism Spectrum Conditions that were very warmly received by our members. Our grateful thanks go to all of our guest speakers.

During the year, both I and the Vice Chair have attended numerous meetings on behalf of the charity and have jointly contributed to training of health professionals at a number of venues both in and out of Bolton by giving a parents' perspective on bringing up sons who have ASC.

We have been working hard (often behind the scenes) with Bolton Council and others in pursuing the status of an Autism Friendly Bolton. Clearly this is not likely to be achieved in the short term but provides a continuing challenge for the forthcoming and successive years. We are short of neither commitment nor energy in this task and will be doing all that we can over the next few years to achieve this goal.

We now look forward to an equally busy and exciting 2018 during which we expect to both grow in stature and contribute to the life of families in Bolton impacted by ASC.

My personal thanks go to all our members and all our friends of BAAS for their continuing support and encouragement.

We are grateful to the following organisations who have supported BAAS during the Year

ASC Healthcare

Antz Junction

Bolton Cares – (Thicketford Centre)

Bolton Community Transport

Bolton Council - Commissioning Team

Bolton Council – Print Unit

Bolton CVS

Breaking Barriers

Bolton Lever Rotary Club

Bolton University

Cascade Magazine

John Hood Coaches

Luxson Ltd