

Fundraising Counts

Alongside major grant funding from public sector bodies including the NHS and local authorities, Autism Berkshire relies for funding on the generosity of individuals and groups of people to raise money for our work in a variety of ways, from one-off donations, gifts in wills, or fundraising challenges.

The biggest challenge undertaken to raise money for Autism Berkshire in 2016-17 was Adrian Bird's 2,900-mile sponsored cycle ride from his home in Sonning Common to Istanbul in Turkey to mark his 50th birthday. His grandnephew George is autistic.

Adrian, pictured right during a stop in Germany during his journey in July and August 2016, braved tough road conditions and being chased by packs of dogs along the way. He raised a fantastic £1,500 in sponsorship from friends and supporters.

Autism Berkshire's joint chair of trustees, Ewan R Duncan, braved atrocious weather conditions to complete the Three Peaks Challenge in August 2016, scaling Britain's three highest mountains - Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon - within 24 hours, to raise an amazing £3,000 for our funds.

With a reduction in grant funding from public sector bodies expected during 2017-18, a renewed emphasis on generating income from fundraising events and other activities is planned.



This will include relaunching and promoting Autism Berkshire's monthly lottery and encouraging supporters who shop online to use the Give As You Live portal – every purchase made in this way generates a donation to our funds.

Thank You

To our funders and supporters

Albert Hunt Trust
Berkshire Community Foundation
Bracknell Town Council
British Gas
Buddies
Datchet Border Morris Dancers
Didymus Charity
DM Thomas Foundation for Young People
Earley Charity
Englefield Estate
Freemasons' Grand Charity
Heathrow Community Fund
Ironmongers Company
League of Distinctly Average Gentlemen
Louis Baylis Charitable Trust
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Mars in the Community
Nag's Head pub, Reading
Reading Valley Tangent Club
St James's Place Foundation
Santander Foundation
Thames Valley Police Property Act Fund
Theodore Roussel Trust
Waitrose Green Coins
(Reading Oxford Road store)

Windsor & Eton Scouts
Woodroffe Benton Foundation

To our key partners

Berkshire East NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Federation
Berkshire West NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Federation
Bracknell Forest Council
Reading Borough Council
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council
Slough Borough Council
West Berkshire Council
Wokingham Borough Council
Big Lottery Fund
National Lottery Awards for All
Heritage Lottery Fund
BBC Children in Need

Autism Berkshire – the working name for Berkshire Autistic Society

Registered office:

Unit 7 Richfield Place, 12 Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8EQ
Charity no: 1076217, Company number: 3750656

AutismBerkshire @autismberkshire

www.autismberkshire.org.uk

Call: 01189 594 594

AGM10/17/MBSA34T

Annual Review 2016-17 Autism Berkshire



Making a difference

Autism Berkshire is the leading autism charity in Berkshire, with more than 25 years' experience of delivering high-quality services throughout the county.

All the support and advice, training workshops and social and leisure activities we provide are driven by a single aim – to make a difference to the lives of children, young people and adults living with autism in Berkshire and their families.

Whether people are exploring the possibility that they or a family member is autistic, they are awaiting an autism assessment or they have received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition, our dedicated team of staff and volunteers is ready to help.

Please read on to learn more about Autism Berkshire's services and achievements and how you can get involved and support our work..



Talking sense about autism.

Helpline: 01189 594 594
www.autismberkshire.org.uk

Apply for your free Autism Alert Card



Delivering for People with Autism

While 2015-16 was a year of transition for Autism Berkshire, with expansion in services and changes within the organisation, the focus for 2016-17 was on delivering services to the people we support.

Services launched in the last quarter of 2015-16, as a result of funding from the Berkshire East and Berkshire West NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Federations, received further funding for 2016-17.

These included advice workshops for parents and carers of children with autism, or on the waiting list for autism assessments, support groups for parents and carers, youth groups in Bracknell, Slough and Windsor, and relaxation classes for children and parents and carers.

Family Seminar workshops, using course materials developed by the National Autistic Society, proved particularly popular with parents. After a successful trial in Slough in June 2016, these were rolled out to the Bracknell Forest and Windsor & Maidenhead areas. Most were fully booked well in advance and feedback from those attending was positive. They will be made available in the west of Berkshire in 2017-18.

Another new development was the launch of a support group for grandparents who are the primary carers or guardians for grandchildren with autism, which meets in Reading. It gives members the opportunity to get together with other people from their generation who are in a similar situation and share experiences.

Requests for advice from the Helpline, the only autism-specific service of its kind in Berkshire, continued at a high level. Home Visits to support families living with autism were also in high demand, with the continued NHS funding enabling us to maintain the expanded service begun in the first quarter of 2016.

The Benefits Service also continued to see high levels of demand, both for help with initial applications for benefits for children, adults and their parents and carers, and with appeals.

Alongside the youth groups supported by the NHS, council-funded groups continued to meet in Reading and Wokingham, while the Lego Club, at Woolhampton in West Berkshire, was so popular that a waiting list had to be introduced, in common with trampolining classes for children and teenagers in Reading and Bracknell.

Members' family fun days at the Thames Valley Adventure Playground continued to be fully booked throughout the year, with five events taking place.

The adult social groups in Reading, Bracknell and Maidenhead remained popular with the over-18s. Sociaeyes and Independent Living courses for this age group were again delivered in Reading, Slough and Maidenhead.

The modernisation of the website begun in 2015-16 was continued, with more content added. More work was put into the Autism Berkshire Facebook page and Twitter feed to keep them updated and to better co-ordinate content with the website. The numbers of Facebook page likes and Twitter followers grew.

Autism Berkshire's Chief Executive Officer, Jane Stanford-Beale, who is a volunteer, received recognition for her work from Prime Minister and Maidenhead MP Theresa May in December 2016, being selected for a Prime Minister's Points of Light Award, recognising an outstanding contribution to the community.

The presentation, above, was made at Autism Berkshire's office by Rob Wilson, the then MP for Reading East and Minister for Civil Society, on the first ever Local Charities Day. Mr Wilson also met trustees and other volunteers, supporters and service users.

Autism in Berkshire: Past & Present, an exhibition developed to mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Berkshire Autistic Society in 1990, was displayed at a number of events during the autumn.

Financial Summary for 2016-17

Total Income	£330,700
Grants and Subscriptions	£287,700
Donations and Fundraising	£43,000
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	£306,100
Fundraising costs	£8,500
Governance costs	£1,200
Excess expenditure funded from reserves	£14,900
Reserves carried forward to 2017-18	£34,800



Source of Support

Emma Slade, who lives in Bracknell, has two children, daughter Lauren, 12, and son Sean, 10 – he was diagnosed with autism in 2015

"Sean has autism and ADHD, and they're looking for ODD – Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

"We got the diagnosis letter along with a pile of leaflets from the referral service at CAHMS in Reading. We didn't get much more help than that as far as autism was concerned.

"Having flicked through a lot of leaflets, I came across Autism Berkshire's and called. I've been on three courses, which were amazing – I went to everything I could – so have been to the Family Seminars on Understanding Autism, Sensory Needs and Managing Anger.

"I've also used the Helpline. I've spoken to Tracy so many times. She's amazing. We've spoke about ways to get Sean to sleep, doing visual timetables and trying to get a Creiling harness for Sean – they pointed me towards the Family Fund for that, which is being processed at the moment, so it's all really helpful.

"Sean attends the Bracknell CAYP Group, which is one of the only groups he goes to, along with trampolining, because he can't cope with mainstream services.

"I try to help as much as I can as well. I help out at the Family Fun Days at Thames Valley Adventure Playground and my husband does as well when he can, depending on how Sean is. I'll carry on volunteering as much as I can."

"Without the help from Jane and other Autism Berkshire staff, I wouldn't have known where to turn. Sean can be a handful at home.

Between Jane and Garrick we've just had a wealth of information. And Gemma has given us so much help between the courses. I just can't say enough for them."

Delivering for families

"My husband and I went on these courses earlier this year. I would highly recommend them. Thank you Autism Berkshire, from the bottom of my heart."

A mother who attended our NAS Family Seminar workshops

"I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Autism Berkshire and Children in Need for the years that both my boys have benefited from trampolining. Rebound therapy has had enormously positive effect on both the boys and we count ourselves as very fortunate to have had access to these fantastic sessions."

A parent whose children attended trampolining sessions

"We felt totally listened to... everything that we raised and other parents raised were listened to and responded to."

A mother who attended a Pre-Assessment Workshop while waiting for an autism assessment appointment

"Wow, what an awesome day. Thank you so much to everyone involved in making it happen."

A parent's comment after one of our regular Family Fun Days

In Numbers 2016-17

1,400	people follow our Facebook page
1,200	attendances at our Youth Groups
1,200	Berkshire Autism Alert Cards in use
1,000	new individuals used our services
500	people attended Members' Family Fun Days
172	Home Visits were made by support workers
119	people were helped by our Benefits Service