



National
Autistic
Society

Our last ten years together

Carol Homden
Chair of Trustees

My son Freddy

Residential school and registered care to supported living...

- Freddy now enjoys a programme of activities in the community with his dedicated National Autistic Society team.



The *Autism Act* in England

As well as similar legislation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

- The *Autism Act* was passed in 2009 and represented a real milestone in the history of autism.
- The first disability specific legislation.
- Placed a duty on all local authorities to have an autism strategy for adults.
- Passed in time to mark our 50th anniversary in 2012.



NAS Academies Trust

The Government's legislation on free schools gave us the opportunity to develop new autism-specific schools and from 2011 to 2020, we opened three new schools:

- **Thames Valley**
- **Church Lawton**
- **Vanguard**



Wider education

- Autism Education Trust has trained over 200,000 education professionals.
- Campaigning to ensure that teacher training includes autism understanding.



Too Much Information

In 2015, autistic people and their families told us that increasing public understanding of autism is the most important thing the National Autistic Society should be doing (alongside improving social care, education and access to diagnosis).

We made four films that reached 65 million people:

- ***Can you make it to the end?***
- ***Could you stand the rejection?***
- ***Make it stop***
- ***Diverted***



World of understanding

- Autism-friendly performances.
- World Autism Awareness Week.
- Autism Hour.
- Autism Friendly Award.



Information community

- *Your Autism* magazine.
- Digital development.
- Policy impact.



Sustaining our charity

- To secure the future of any charity means gaining support from all who can help.
- We made major strides in Individual Giving.
- From bike rides to the Spectrum Ball.
- Achieved funding dedicated to specialist helplines.
- And major gifts including for the Cullum Centres.
- But never enough and this work is never done.



The Cullum Centres

Most autistic children are educated in mainstream settings and with the generous support of Peter Cullum, we have been able to develop autism units attached to mainstream schools.

Currently, three centres are open and two more are under development.



Adult residential care services moving to community-based supported living

88% Good or outstanding and a constant journey for quality and the support people need.

- Middlefield Manor moves – including my son!
- New provision at what was Daldorch House School.
- New young people's service at Kingsley House.
- And some more community provision around Somerset Court.



Growing the UK branch network

- We now have 116 branches across the UK, providing support to some 17,600 people.
- Branches provide a place to meet people in a similar situation and who understand.
- And following the Covid lockdowns, the most recent development is to create online branches.



Developing services in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

- The National Autistic Society operates across the UK with services in each nation.
- We have a new online branch serving the Highlands and Islands in Scotland.
- In Northern Ireland we have opened a new state-of-the-art day service.
- In Wales, Ty Ddraig is an inspirational day service supporting adults with complex and challenging needs.



And now.. the Autism Act 2

Published on 21 July, the Autism Strategy for England promises to:

- invest £13 million to reduce diagnosis waiting times for children and adults
- increase public understanding of autism with a long-term, nationwide initiative
- provide £18.5 million to prevent autistic people from falling into mental health crisis and £21 million to local authorities to help people in mental health hospitals back into the community
- train education professionals, job centre staff and frontline staff in the justice system.



Challenging times

- Journey of improvement.
- Financial realities.
- Continuing services through Covid.



Faces for the future



Caroline Stevens
and Stephen Ladyman

Thank you and Happy Birthday 2022



National
Autistic
Society



An extraordinary **60 years**
Let's make the next 60 count