



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			Period end date		
	01	09	2019	To	31	08

Section A

Reference and administration details

Charity name	Angels Support Group Hitchin	
Other names charity is known by		
Registered charity number (if any)	1117059	
Charity's principal address	Unit 19, The Pixmore Business Centre, Letchworth HERTS	
	Postcode	SG6 1JG

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Clare Slater	Chair		Members at AGM/ trustees
2	Olukemi Adejare			Members at AGM/ trustees
3	Hilary Forrester	Secretary		Members at AGM/ trustees
4	Justin Richards			Members at AGM/ trustees
5	Rowena Crabtree			Members at AGM/ trustees
6	John Skeeles	Treasurer		Members at AGM/ trustees
7	Abbie Carpenter		From 13/01/2020	Members at AGM/ trustees
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

The charity employed the following senior staff members during the year:

Parent Support Manager; Leise Cooper

Specialist Support Practitioner; Penny Howarth

Financial Manager; Raine Simcox

Meeting Supervisor; Kirsten Bennet

Specialist Support Practitioner; Judith Russell (Until 24th September 2019)

Administrator: Caroline Upcraft (from 1st July 2020)

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution adopted on the 19 th January 2005. As amended 29 th September 2015
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Unincorporated Association
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed at the AGM by the members or at other times by the existing trustees

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:	
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Section C

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

1. Provide support and guidance to parents/carers/siblings of children who are diagnosed with (or are being assessed for) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their associated conditions.
2. Provide relief for the above children and their parents/carers by providing facilities in the interest of social welfare and for recreation and other leisure time occupation.
3. Advance the education of the public and statutory bodies in matters related to ADHD and ASD.
4. Promote other such charitable purpose.

Regular support group meetings

Until March 2020 we held weekly meetings for parents/carers in Hitchin and Stevenage and evening drop-in sessions in Hitchin and Stevenage every half term. Some of the meetings provided advice from external professionals or Angels staff on a range of topics related to ASD and ADHD. The other sessions were self-help groups with a qualified facilitator present. From March 2020, when the covid restrictions impacted on our services, the support groups were all delivered remotely via Zoom.

These meetings benefit the members of the charity in several ways.

- They provide the opportunity to find out about new strategies and ideas which they can use to support their children. This can help parents/carers to adapt their parenting skills to ease the stress and anxiety of children with ASD/ADHD
- Having the opportunity to discuss issues in self-help groups with people with similar concerns helps to relieve parents/carers from some of the stresses and feelings of isolation that can result.
- They help parents/carers to feel confident in supporting their child in the education system which in turn helps the child to reach their potential.
- They help parents/carers and their children to have a more positive self-image following diagnosis.

These benefits are all in line with objective one as set out above.

The meetings are open to anyone who is a member of the charity. Membership is subject to only one criterion and that is that the member must be a parent/carer of a child who has been diagnosed with (or is being assessed for) ASD/ADHD. This ensures that the beneficiaries are in line with the charity's aims.

There is no membership fee and no charge for attending the meetings. We give attendees the opportunity to make a small voluntary donation if they would like to but there is no pressure to do so. This ensures that all members can benefit regardless of income levels.

There is no geographical restriction imposed by the charity but in practice, as members have to get to the meetings, then those who benefit tend to be living in Hitchin, Letchworth, Stevenage and surrounding villages. The meetings are held in family centres, community centres or schools to make access as easy as possible for a wide range of members. The virtual meetings via zoom have made it easier for members to attend regardless of their location. During the pandemic we

have seen an increase in the number of new members who are from a wider geographic area than the North Herts and Stevenage community, as our services have become more accessible online.

Most of the meetings are during the day with a free crèche available in one location, as this enables parents/carers to attend while their children are either at school or in the crèche. Evening meetings are held every half term to enable those who work during the day to attend. During lockdown, the virtual meetings have been accessible for those parents who have had their children at home whereas physical meetings would have been impossible for them to attend.

In response to the pandemic, we also continued our virtual meetings during the summer holidays, to give parents extra support during the long break while usual activities and support were not available.

One-to-One Clinic meetings

Angels provided several clinic appointments each week during the school terms. These offered members the opportunity to access more targeted, specific support where needed. The appointments allowed members the time to discuss particular issues related to their child on a one-to-one basis with a trained Specialist Support Practitioner (SSP). They also provided the facility for a SSP to attend a school meeting or other appointment to provide support for the parent/carer. From March 2020, when the covid restrictions impacted on our services, the one-to-one service continued remotely using a variety of applications e.g. zoom, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp.

The clinic appointments provide the same benefits to the members as the support group meetings but are just more flexible. They allow members, who do not feel comfortable discussing issues in a group setting, access to support and also provide a more suitable time for issues which are too complex and would take up too much time in a group meeting.

These benefits are all in line with objective one as set out above.

The meetings are open to anyone who is a member of the charity (see above for definition of membership). This ensures that the beneficiaries are in line with the charity's aims. The service has been popular and the number of appointments limited because of funding restrictions so there has often been a waiting list in place.

There is no charge for attending the appointments.

There is no geographical restriction imposed by the charity but in practice, as members have to get to the appointments, then those who benefit tend to be living in Hitchin, Letchworth, Stevenage, Royston and surrounding villages. The meetings are held in a variety of locations including family centres, schools and other clinics to make access as easy as possible for a wide range of members. The virtual meetings via zoom etc. have made it easier for members to access this service regardless of their location.

Parent Support via phone, email and Facebook

In addition to the one-to-one clinic appointments members have also accessed advice and support from the SSP's remotely via phone, email or Facebook Messenger. This support was available during term time and a limited service was also available over the school holidays. There was also a "secret" Facebook group which was available only to members and allowed them to discuss issues and get advice from other parents as well as the SSPs. This online group was fully moderated by

the SSPs so it enabled parents to access support at a time that suits them.

This support provides the same benefits to the members as the support group meetings but just in a more flexible, virtual way. It allows members, who do not feel comfortable discussing issues in a group setting or face to face, access to support and also provides support to parents who can not attend the support groups due to their location or timing.

These benefits are all in line with objective one as set out above.

This support is available to anyone who is a member of the charity (see above for definition of membership). This ensures that the beneficiaries are in line with the charity's aims.

There is no charge for accessing this support.

There is no geographical restriction imposed by the charity, so this part of the service is accessed by members from a wider area including most parts of Hertfordshire and some parts of Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire.

Networking with various organisations

The Parent Support Manager and other team members regularly meet with local statutory agencies such as health professionals (Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, CAMHS workers and Community Paediatricians and their teams) working with ADHD and ASD, the Herts County Council Communication and Autism Specialist Advisory service, Herts Children Services social workers, Family Centre Managers, local school SENCO's and Outreach workers, the Herts Parent Carer Forum and other agencies supporting parents and representatives from other similar support groups supporting parents/carers of children with ADHD and/or ASD from across Hertfordshire, as a way of pooling resources and avoiding duplication of effort.

The benefits of this are as follows;

- It enables the Parent Support Manager and other team members to keep up to date with the available support for children/families and ways of accessing it. They can then pass this information on to members as required.
- It ensures that local statutory services are kept aware of the needs of children with ASD/ADHD and their families.
- It ensures that health professionals in the area are aware of the charity and the support provided and so will pass on the details of the charity to families with a newly diagnosed child.
- It enables them to talk directly to teaching professionals which helps improve understanding of the conditions within local schools.

These benefits are in line with objectives one and three.

The beneficiaries include our member families as they can access the information through support group meetings. The benefit of this activity also extends beyond our membership as consultation with local teaching professionals/ statutory services can help to improve services for all children with ASD/ADHD in the local area not just those who are members of the charity.

There is no charge associated with this activity.

For all the above activities there have been no identified harmful effects associated with providing the benefits.

The charity does employ people to provide various services and so does provide private benefits to people other than the beneficiaries. These private benefits are all incidental as they all contribute directly towards achieving the charity's objectives.

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

Although the charity employs several staff it is still very dependent on the contribution made by volunteers. There is a loyal team of volunteer members working hard in all the following areas;

Completing various administrative tasks.

Fundraising and Funding Applications

Promoting our services within the local community

Planning and overseeing services through being involved in our management committee.

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers for their hard work without which we would not be able to provide the same level of service

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**Activities**

During the year from 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020 the membership of the charity has increased by 211 families so at 31st Aug 2020 we had 1566 families in our membership with at least 3310 children including siblings. 1694 of the children have a diagnosis of (or are being assessed for) ADHD and/or ASD (856 have a diagnosis of ADHD and 1289 of ASD).

Throughout the year 121 parents/carers attended one or more of the support groups (either face to face or virtual). Some members came very regularly (over 30 times during the year) and some for just one or two meetings. On average they attended 6 meetings each this year.

In addition to our regular support groups we have also run several workshops covering a range of topics: Access to Healthcare, ADHD/ASD parenting and EHCP application forms. These courses provide more in-depth information in smaller groups. 31 families have accessed support through these smaller groups.

147 families used the one-to-one service during the year. They accessed support in a variety of ways with the service providing: 149 hours of face to face (or video call) meetings, 171 hours of support at meetings with other professionals (school, Health Visitor, multi-agency meetings etc.), 108 hours of support via phone/email and 139 hours of support through text/Facebook Messenger.

Outcomes

In order to be able to measure the benefits to our members, of accessing Angels services, we have implemented a ladder scale for 4 outcomes that we have identified as important to our members. The four outcomes are:

- Parents will have a greater understanding of their child's conditions and how they impact on their child's learning and behaviour.
- Parents will have improved confidence in their parenting skills having gained a wider range of strategies to support their child.
- Parents feel less isolated, with a network of local parents to talk to who understand the issues they are facing.
- Parents are working more effectively with their child's school, services and community resulting in a positive experience for their child.

For members that joined Angels since October 2016 we have asked them to complete an initial questionnaire to find out how they rated themselves on the scales for each of the four outcomes. 6 months later we asked them to redo the questionnaire and have captured the improvements they have made. We have gathered initial and follow up questionnaires for 227 of these members and improvements have been as follows:

- 67% have improved their understanding of their child's conditions
- 63% have improved confidence in their parenting skills
- 52% have reported feeling less isolated
- 42% have reported that they are working more effectively with their child's school and other services.

We will continue to track and record progress of these members and expect the proportions reporting an improvement to increase as they

continue to access Angels services over subsequent years. We will also be tracking progress for new members joining Angels.

Grants

At the end of October 19 our three-year funding from Big Lottery came to an end. Fortunately, we were awarded five-year continuation funding starting in November 2019 (£302,318) from The National Lottery Community Fund which, for the first few years, will cover the main staff costs related to our support groups, some of our one-to-one staff time and most of our overheads.

We also received donations in July/Aug 2019 from the following County Councillors from their Locality Budgets which we used to support our services this year:

£500 from Judi Billing towards the costs of running our Hitchin Support Group

£250 from Joshua Bennet Lovell and £250 from Sharon Taylor towards the costs of running our Stevenage Support Group

£500 from Simon Bloxham towards the costs of the one-to-one service in Letchworth.

The remaining one-to-one service costs were covered by two-year funding starting in January 2020 (£10,000) from St James's Place Foundation and one year funding starting in February 2020 (£2,199) from Shanly Foundation.

In addition, we received one year funding starting in October 2019 (£4,073) from Hertfordshire Community Foundation to part fund a project to improve access to healthcare for children and young people with Autism and ADHD. This enabled us to run several workshops for parents to improve their understanding of the issues and learn strategies to support their children. It also paid for additional one-to-one support focussing on health and social care issues.

In June 2020 we received a £500 grant from Tesco Bags of Help Covid 19 community fund to help support our organisation with some of the changes and costs associated with running our support groups remotely. We received a second £500 grant in August 2020 which allowed us to add some extra support groups over the summer holidays and will also fund a rerun of our Access to Healthcare course in October 20.

Donations and Support

We are grateful to once again have been supported by the staff and customers of White Stuff in Hitchin. This year they have raised £1,464 which has helped us to fund some of our core costs and additional one-to-one sessions required as a result of the pandemic.

In September 2019, The Body Shop in Letchworth kindly donated £100 raised by their staff and customers.

In November 2019 we received a generous £200 donation from Hitchin Round Table with a further £200 donation in January 2020.

In December 2019, the staff and customers of the Hitchin branch of Barclays raised £315 for us which was match funded by a further £315 from Barclays. WHSmith Trust also kindly donated £200.

Hitchin Community Choir held a collection at their Christmas concert and raised £94.

Over the Christmas break a group of Stevenage mountain bikers "Santa Cruise" once again organised a sponsored bike ride in fancy dress with 105 Santas, 2 Elves and a Reindeer taking part. This is the 5th year they have raised funds for Angels and they challenged themselves to beat last year's total and raised a fantastic £4006 through sponsorship and cash collections.

We also held a Christmas raffle with prizes generously donated by local businesses, our members and Trustees. This year we raised £518 in ticket sales.

Over the Christmas period St Katherine Church in Ickleford raised £500 for Angels by holding collections in services and at carol singing.

In April 2020 we received a donation of £50 from ARK Lasting Powers and Wills.

This year one of our members Karl Hudson and his running partner Marc challenged themselves not only to run a marathon but also to climb Kilimanjaro. They kindly chose to fundraise for Angels and raised £951 in sponsorship and gift aid. Unfortunately, the pandemic prevented them from completing the planned challenges, but we are grateful for their support and hope that they get to complete their challenges in the future.

Over the year we have also been supported by many members making one-off and regular donations and supporting us through various events. This included a Trustee birthday with donations requested instead of gifts (raising £215).

This has been a challenging year for everyone. We are grateful to our staff for swiftly adapting the support and services provided to enable families to continue being supported remotely throughout the pandemic. We are looking forward to returning to face-to-face support as soon as it is allowed (and safe) to do so but having come to grips with using remote methods such as zoom meetings we will explore how we can maximise the impact of our support in the future using both face to face and remote methods as appropriate.

During the pandemic, like most charities, we had a substantial drop in our fundraising income as all community fundraising stopped during the lockdown. As we come out of the pandemic this will be a key area for us to re-establish. We are incredibly grateful to all the community organisations, companies and individuals including our members, their families and friends who have supported us during the year and allowed us to adapt and continue the services we provide to our members throughout the pandemic.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Trustees have decided that the charity needs to hold reserves to cover the possibility of a grant being cut short or not renewed. Holding reserves will allow the Trustees time to find alternative sources of funding without having to make immediate redundancies. It was agreed that a level of 6 months of payroll and rent costs would allow enough time for alternative funding to be found or cutbacks in expenditure to be planned.

This gives a planned reserve of £33,150 based on the budgeted salary and rent costs for the first quarter of the 2020/2021 financial year.

The actual reserves held at the end of this financial year were £30,170. This is slightly lower than the planned reserve due to the impact of the pandemic on community fundraising this year but should be achieved within the next year once normal fundraising has resumed.

The reserve policy will be reconsidered regularly to make sure that the current financial position of the charity and predictability of future funding is considered in setting the reserve policy

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

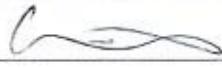
Section F

Other optional information

Section G**Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	JOHN WILLIAM SKELES	L. LOUISE SLATER
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	TREASURER	CHAIR
Date	12. 6-21	