

Autism Jersey

Annual report – 2006/2007



Championing a full and inclusive life for people with Autism, Aspergers Syndrome and other associated complex developmental disorders, by raising awareness and working in partnership with all agencies to help and support those people, their families and carers.

Foreword...

This last year or so has certainly been an exciting roller coaster of events! Who would have thought that less than two years since Autism Jersey came into being, we would be employing three people and actually delivering services from our own offices! As a community, we are always very quick to point out our own failings (and the shortcomings of others!), but from an early age, we are often discouraged from sharing our successes for fear of being labelled “big headed”. Well we think this is different! We think we have a great deal to celebrate and we think that we should be a bit big headed from time to time! In preparing this Annual report, we have tried to celebrate many of our successes. We know that it isn't perfect and that there is still a long way to go, but we are travelling in the right direction and we are being supported by many, many people.

We now have full working partnerships with all of the statutory agencies and many of the voluntary organisations, and there truly is an air of change for the better. Services for people with autism and their families and carers are continuing to develop and we have great optimism and hope for the future.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those people that have helped and supported us in our first year of existence. Particular thanks must go to Richard Mills from the National Autistic Society for his ongoing mentoring and assistance. Special thanks is also due to a large number of other people, far too many to list separately. To all of you, whoever you are and in whatever your capacity, we thank you. Without you we would not have achieved so much!

Executive Directors Report – 2006 / 2007

Thanks to the incredible generosity of the Lloyds TSB Foundation and a recruitment process that was described by them as “an example of best practice in Governance”, I was quite simply delighted to be appointed the first Executive Director of Autism Jersey, in August of 2006. I know we have a long way to go and a great deal to do, but with the continued support of you all, the Board of Trustees of Autism Jersey and the many professional partners that we have established over the past two years, I know we can really make a difference to peoples lives. We are very proud to be associated with Autism Jersey, as I know you all are.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all of the members of the Board of Trustees of Autism Jersey for their confidence and ongoing support. I would however, like to take this opportunity to express my special, sincere and heartfelt personal thanks to Heather Mc Lelland, the “woman behind Autism Jersey”. Without Heather, we simply would not be where we are today. We are very sad to hear of her decision to stand down from the Board of Trustees, and we will all miss her drive, determination and clarity of thought immensely.

That being said, she is staying on in a consultancy basis, co-opted onto the Board, and she does leave us and our befriending scheme in a very healthy position. Suzanne and Jo are doing a wonderful job, and working to Heathers high standards, we know the future of our scheme is assured!

I would also like to formally acknowledge the efforts and incredible hard work that Kevin Bates has given to Autism Jersey as our treasurer. Kevin has been an incredible asset to Autism Jersey and is the very epitome of what a treasurer for a charity should be. I will miss trying to get money out of him!! That being said, the Board is being joined by Elaine Mc Dougal who comes on Kevin’s recommendations, so I am sure we remain in very good hands.

Another acknowledgment really does have to go to Gary Buesnel, who stepped down earlier this year. Gary was always the one that spotted the potential errors and had a great clarity of thought. Gary was always the one that ensured that all of the “T’s” were crossed and the “I’s” were dotted. We miss him very much indeed and hope that one day he may come back onto the Board.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this first year and I look forward to seeing Autism Jersey continue to develop in the exciting way that it has started.

I would like to join the Board of Trustees of Autism Jersey in thanking you all, whoever you are, and for whatever it is that you have done for us! Thank you!!



NAS Branch Meetings

The National
Autistic Society

We have continued with the Branch meetings in a variety of locations and with different emphasis. As some of you will remember, we tried a room at a pub (which turned out to be the Cellar!!), a get together at the Bridge and even a "mum's night out", which was really very well attended and great fun. We have plans for a bowling night and lots more. Details will be in the next newsletter. We will continue to run these get-togethers, as we think they prove an invaluable help to some people, if only as a way to "get it off my chest".



The Lions Club

Yes, amazingly, those wonderful people at the Jersey Lions Club International did provide The Bressat Family with a two week, all inclusive holiday on the glorious island of Tenerife in May.

Flights, transfers, accommodation, outings, entertainment and all meals were provided with the help and co-operation of the local Lions and of several of the Tenerife bars, restaurants, hotels and amusements parks.

Pictured are the Bressat Family, together with Lions club President David Picot and our own Philip Le Claire.

A very special thank you has to go to Alan Le Feuvre, who did all of the arranging, and even went over to Tenerife to check out the area, the activities and the accommodation.

We are delighted that a partnership has been struck with such a wonderful organization and we truly hope that we will have the opportunity to work together again in the very near future.

The Lions club motto is "*Ordinary People, Amazing Things*". We beg to differ... "*AMAZING People, Amazing Things*" would be much more apt!

THANK YOU LIONS!!!!



All set for the trip!!!!

Befriending Scheme

Our original team of Befrienders

Almost 2 years ago now, we first approached Claire Rintoul, the then head of Volunteer Services for the National Autistic Society to find out more about their "Befriending Scheme". It sounded fantastic and just what we needed here in Jersey, and so Heather Mc Lelland and Philip Le Claire arranged to meet Claire and Eileen Hopkins (a Director of the NAS) in London and then in Jersey to find out how we could access this service locally. Within a matter of just a few short months, and thanks to generous funding from both The Association of Jersey Charities and Barclays, our own highly successful Befriending Scheme was born. Heather attended training in the UK and was appointed as the first coordinator of the Scheme in January 2006, to run a one year trial project. We ambitiously hoped to match as many as 10 families by December 2006. So far we have matched almost 20 families!



Heather has successfully completed the one year trial project and following a recruitment drive, we are delighted to announce that Suzanne Rentsch has been appointed as the Befriending Coordinator and Jo Mc Intosh our Befriending Administrator on the Befriending Team.



Local Befriending at work!

For those of you that are not familiar, Befrienders can be matched with a child, teenage or adult affected by autism, or could spend time with others in the family - brothers, sisters, mum or dad. They do a huge variety of things and the service is free. If you would like to volunteer to be a Befriender, or if you would like a Befriender, please contact Jo Mc Intosh in the Autism Jersey office on 449127.



Jo Mc Intosh

Tony Attwood:

In May 2006 we were fortunate to secure a full day, 2 session seminar with Professor Tony Attwood, one of the worlds leading experts on Aspergers Syndrome. We had hoped to sell 150 tickets, but on the day found ourselves cramming over 230 people into the hall at the Bridge!! We even had to borrow some chairs as we didn't have enough – and don't mention the fact that the borrowed chairs were delivered to the Bridge pub at the Weighbridge before ending up at the venue with only minutes to spare!!



Professor Tony Attwood

Anyway, once we had managed to cram all of the people into hall, we were treated to an animated and highly informed talk which managed to reach people with autism, professionals and parents / families alike.

We were very lucky to secure Professor Attwood, as his diary is now fully booked until 2010!! Another coup for Autism Jersey!!

The ITEX Walk 2006



Congratulations to everyone who was involved with the 2006 and 2007 ITEX Walk. We were lucky enough to be chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the 2006 walk and we received a staggering £3,477.81 from them. Our very own Linda Scott completed the course in 2006 and we are all very proud of her. Well done Linda!! A big thanks also goes out to all of the volunteers that helped, especially our own Kevin Bates for

organising all of our volunteers.

This year we ran the base at Noirmont again (where this picture was taken) and we were delighted to see so many of you, both families and professionals, come along to help.



Sea Cadets Gun Pull – 10th September 2006

On a hot, September morning last year, Philip stood in the car park at Le Hocq, waiting for our "team" to turn up to pull a great big cannon and limber from Le Hocq to Grouville.

As we should possibly have predicted, when it actually came down to it on the day, none of our lads felt able to face it and poor old Gary Buesnel was the only one that was there to pull!

Following a load of panicked phone calls, we finally managed to cobble together a replacement team and did the leg from St Martins Public Hall to Trinity Community centre! Following the gargantuan efforts of the Sea Cadet and Marine Cadet Corps of TS Jersey, who not only pulled the gun all around the island but also stopped every passer by and motorist with a rattling bucket, we were to be handed over the incredible sum of £2,602.27!

I'm sure that you will all join us in thanking the Sea Cadets & in particular Sgt Kate Davis & Brian Harris for choosing us & supporting us all the way! Thanks too to the team of "Pullers".

We may get a chance to pull a leg again this year and we will be approaching you for help in the near future! You have been warned!



The "Pullers"!!!

Transition Review Workshops

In December 2006, we were invited onto the "Transition Review Panel" as an agency in our own right. This panel has been created by the Education Department and Social Services and its purpose is to ensure that all year 9 and year 11 students that have a Record of Need are given the best possible opportunities for the future. This panel sits twice a year and we are honoured to have been given a place and the opportunity to work in full partnership with the Education Department, Social Services, Jersey Employment Trust and Workwise

The One Stop Shop for Autism



The only place you need to go..... To find out all you need to know!

Thanks to the funding that we received from the Lloyds TSB Foundation for the Channel Islands for our Executive Director, and an anonymous benefactor that was tapped up by our Vice Chairman Richard Miles, we have been able to open a resource and advice centre for absolutely anyone seeking information on Autism and how to access services. The office is at "The Bridge", the integrated families centre (formerly St Marks School) and is mainly open during office hours, Monday to Friday. Its is also open out of hours by appointment. As we are getting busier, it probably would be a good idea to telephone before you pop in to make sure that we are going to be in. Remember, you can call us on the Freephone number, 0800 735 1070

Parent to Parent Line

A free, confidential telephone support service for parents of an adult or child with an ASD

Tel: 0800 9 520 520

Open 24 hours

Call any time and leave a message and contact number

Last year, we launched the National Autistic Societies "Parent to Parent Line" at a seminar that we held for the Islands GP's. Parent to Parent line is a free, confidential telephone support service offered by volunteer parents to other parents of an adult or child with an autistic spectrum disorder. If you need someone to talk to in a sympathetic, totally non judgemental and anonymous way, the Parent to Parent line could be just what you are looking for. It has the advantage (or disadvantage depending on your perspective!) that none of the volunteers are from Jersey, so you won't be talking to somebody that knows you.



A Parent to Parent Volunteer

Youth Work

As you know, Autism Jersey was the driving force behind the creation of the post of Inclusion Youth Worker and the development of the "Inclusion Youth Project" and now in partnership with Mencap and the Youth Service, we employ Hannah Clarke full time to ensure that all of the young people in Jersey with autism are given appropriate youth work opportunities.



The project oversees the continued running of the "Chilled Out Club" on a Tuesday night at the Move on Youth Café in Liberation Square for young people on the Autistic Spectrum in years 9 and 10. Currently there are 14 young people on the Autistic Spectrum and 5 'neuro typical' buddies who attend the club.



Chilled out trip to Guernsey

We also have the "Friday night Club" for young people with both AS and Learning Disabilities aged 16 to 21 at the St Helier Methodist Centre. This club has only been running for a few months and already has 13 members with special needs and 4 mainstream buddies.



Hannah Clarke – Inclusion Youth Project Senior

The Inclusion Project has also worked in partnership with St Lawrence Youth Club to open a Monday after school club for young people with Autism in years 7 and 8. This opened in October 2006 and has 11 members with an ASD, including a young leader who has Aspergers Syndrome! St Lawrence and Trinity youth clubs also now offer supported places for young people with an ASD to access the mainstream clubs.

The Inclusion Project is now in the process of applying for the funding we need to deliver a "Personal Development Plan" for young people with special needs, based on the Princes Trust scheme that has been so successful. If this programme goes ahead and is as successful as we intend it to be, it has the potential to save the island over £1.3m per 16 people over the next 10 years!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, know of any young people who would like to attend a youth club or even if you would just like any more information about the Youth Inclusion Project then please contact Hannah on Tel: 449257 or 07797 713375 or E-mail; hannahclarke@youthservice.yc.je

Income Support

The whole benefits system in Jersey is changing in Jersey on the 1st January 2008.

Autism Jersey have been working in very close partnership with the Social Security Department over the last year or so, to ensure that the forms and the administration of the new system fully meets the needs of people affected by autism in Jersey.



The excellent news is that the Social Security Department have now stated that all people over the age of 16 that are not in full time education, will have the status of a "Household" in their own right, and the income of the rest of the family will not have a bearing on the benefits that that individual can claim / receive.

If you have received the initial form, it is vital that you return it as a matter of urgency. It is the information in these initial forms that will frame the basis of the levels of financial support that will be available.



SPELL® Training

Structure

Positive expectation and approaches

Empathy

Low arousal

Links

The SPELL framework recognises the individual and unique needs of each child and adult and emphasises that all planning and intervention be organised on this basis. We believe that a number of *interlinking themes* are known to be of benefit to children and adults with an autistic spectrum disorder and that by building on strengths and reducing the disabling effects of the condition, progress can be made in personal growth and development with the promotion of opportunity and as full a life as possible.

24 people from a variety of agencies (including Education Sport & Culture, Health & Social Services, Social Security, Speech & Language Services, Youth Service, Mental Health Services and yes, even Autism Jersey!) are now trained by the NAS as *SPELL* trainers.

Richard Mills and Mike Collins from the NAS created this training and it was launched in Jersey as a pilot in February last year. A second group of trainers were trained in December and the training has now been delivered to more than 450 people. It is also now in the Highlands Prospectus and is being delivered to an ever wider audience.

We are also delighted to hear that we have been short listed for a "National Training Award" and the team of Validators were in the Island on the 26th June to look at the scheme in great detail. We won't find out the results till October, so fingers crossed!!

Driving

We have now trained some driving instructors and the Driving Examiners for the Motor Traffic Department, and Philip re-sat his driving test in July, to see just how "Autism Friendly" it is. As a result, the test "script" is being rewritten to make it



clearer. A very big thank you must go to Alan Muir, the head of Driver and Vehicle Standards, who has been incredibly supportive and accommodating.

The *help!* Programme

The aim of the *help!* programme is to provide parents and full-time carers, with post diagnostic information and advice, to develop their knowledge and understanding of autistic spectrum disorders, positive management strategies and local support services.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the last course due to insufficient interest, but we now think we know where we went wrong and so hope to be able to put on a course later this year, that more of you will be able to attend.



Free Lending Library of Autism related resources (Books, Video's DVD's etc), now open at the Bridge!

One of our volunteers, Steve, is currently compiling a database, which will contain details of all of the books, videos and DVD's in our library. Once it is completed it will be sent out with the next newsletter.

Social Services - SNS Internal review

Autism Jersey has been invited onto the steering group that is currently overseeing the internal review of all of Special Needs Services.

Small, specific groups are being formed to look at everything from respite to residential services and many of you will be canvassed for your opinions. Please be as honest and as open as you can be. If we don't identify the areas of greatest need, and greatest existing strength, we will be unable to make constructive suggestions for improvement or change.

CHAT OVER COFFEE....

We continue to run our "chat over coffee" on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11 am in Le Crunch Café at The Bridge, Le Geyt Road, St Saviour (old St Marks School)

lives or works with it. You can find out more about the Befriending Scheme, borrow books and videos from our library, or simply Relax and chat with people who know just how you feel!



WORK!!!

Autism Jersey now has an excellent working relationship with all of the agencies that deal with the employment of people with disabilities, and most especially JEND, JET and Workwise. We have seen an increase in the number of people with an ASD that access support through the Jersey Employment Trust and we hope to continue to build the links between our organisations.

We are also delighted that Senator Frank Walker has made the issue of employment and meaningful occupation a matter of high importance and he has charged his assistant Chief Minister, Deputy Ian Gorst with looking at ways to improve the lot of people with Autism in Jersey. The group has now been formed and is comprised of Ian Gorst (Chairman), Jocelyn Butterworth (JET), Chris Dunne (H & SS), Carl Blackmore (Les Amis), Fiona Mc Laughlin (Le Geyt Services), Stewart Maurant (Mencap), Lorraine Lewis and our own Philip Le Claire. The group are looking at ways to help people with disabilities to live their lives to their full potential.



(formerly known as *PARIS (Public Autism Resource & Information Service)*)

This is a new online service provided by The National Autistic Society (NAS). It draws from a UK-wide database of diagnostic services, schools, support groups, training courses, residential and day services and much more. This website is designed to help people with autism (including those with Asperger Syndrome), their families and the people who work with them professionally to find out more about the services available to them. Through simple searches and browsing, users are able to find their nearest school, adult centre, respite service, play scheme or other type of local or national service. This service harnesses 40 years experience and expertise of the NAS. The site can be found at www.autismdirectory.org.uk

Aquasplash Nights

These have continued to be a great success and very popular, and so we can confirm that we will be having more of these nights during the coming year. As always, entrance for members will remain FREE!!



SNOWCAKE

In March of this year, we held a Gala showing in the presence of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor of the movie "SNOWCAKE", a wonderful story of an Englishman coming to terms with the fact that he has been party to the death of a young girl, whilst trying to communicate with her mother, an incredible High Functioning woman with Autism.

More than 120 of you attended the Gala, enjoying a glass of bubbly or two and then the main feature.

His Excellency and Lady Ridgway thoroughly enjoyed the evening and we were delighted to receive a personal, handwritten letter of thanks the very next day. A big thank you to Deputy Kevin Lewis of the Forum for hosting this event.



Alan Rickman & Sigourney Weaver



Advocacy Service:

Autism Jersey now offers a free of charge, non-legal advocacy service to all of its members. Whether it is an Education review, a meeting with Social Services or Housing, or even a job interview, we are able to offer a free of charge service to advise you before, during and after your meeting in complete and total confidence.

We have so far supported more than thirty families with advocacy and the service is growing all of the time. If you would like to access this service, please contact us on 449128 or admin@autismersey.org and remember, the service is confidential and free!

Please give as much notice as possible, as this service can be very busy.

Summer Play Schemes

£5,000 from Help a Jersey Child



As many of you will remember (with varying degrees of terror!) in 2005, there were no specialist places for our Children. Last year, thanks to an incredibly generous donation of £5,000 from *HELP A JERSEY CHILD*, we were able to provide 125 sessions of exciting activities for the secondary school children, ranging from Scuba Diving to rock climbing and 400 half day places (that is 10 children for four full weeks @ 2 sessions per day) for the primary school children.

Both of these summer schemes were delivered at the standard mainstream rate, which means that thanks to the generosity of HELP A JERSEY CHILD and the incredible help and support of Rachel Sawyer of ES & C, we were not discriminated against on the basis of any disability.

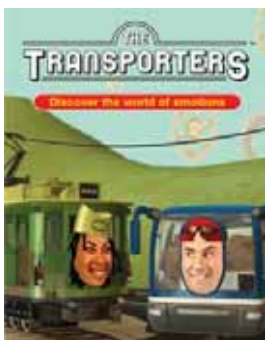
We are delighted to announce that Help a Jersey Child has helped us again this year with another £5,000. This has enabled us to expand the Primary scheme to include the children with an ASD that attend Mainstream Schools and also those that attend St James' school. We really do owe them a huge dept of gratitude and thanks.

Babysitting

As you know, working in close partnership with the Jersey Childcare trust, we now have a list of people that are able to provide babysitting services. What makes this so exciting is that not only have they been police checked & had their references checked, but they have all been trained in autism! This is a great example of the advantages of having an office at the Bridge as it provides seemingly limitless opportunities for partnership working.



If you would like a copy of the list, please contact Philip at the office.



The Transporters

This year saw the launch of the DVD "The Transporters", which has been developed by Simon Baron-Cohen at Cambridge University.

Autism Jersey has so far distributed more than 200 copies of this DVD, completely free of charge!

If you haven't had your free copy and would like one, please contact Philip in the office. Supplies are now limited and will be issued on a first come first served basis.



The British Institute for learning Disabilities

Thanks to the incredible hard work of Karen Le Mouton from the Education department, Jersey has now been established as a satellite training centre for BILD. Autism Jersey is a full partner in this venture and we have joined a group of 20 assessors to mark the learners work locally.

The training is currently all focused on the ASD modules, but it will eventually look at training for Learning Disabilities and other appropriate groups.

Membership;

Membership of Autism Jersey has increased from just 36 to over 140 in the past year!



Championing a full and inclusive life for people with Autism, Aspergers Syndrome and other associated complex developmental disorders, by raising awareness and working in partnership with all agencies to help and support those people, their families and carers.

Membership Application Form

Please fill in every part of this form, and return it to us at the address below. Please note that all of the information on this form will be kept as computer records and used for our purposes only. It will not be passed onto any third parties without your express permission. Autism Jersey is registered under the Data Protection (Jersey) Law, no. 16075*;

Surname

Forenames

Address;

Post Code.....

Telephone no;

Mobile Number;

Email Address;

Occupation;

Type of Membership:

Professional (working with Autism) **Individual** (person with Autism)

Interested Party (I have a general interest) **Family** ^{*2}

^{*2} *Names of additional Family Members*

.....

I am happy for the information on this form to be shared with other agencies

Signed

Name in print *Date signed*

I am interested in the following:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Befriending | <input type="checkbox"/> | Volunteering | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The NAS <i>help!</i> programme | <input type="checkbox"/> | Training | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Youth Work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Support into Work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Coffee Mornings | <input type="checkbox"/> | Newsletter ^{*3} | <input type="checkbox"/> |

^{*3} Please tick this box if you would like to receive a regular copy of our free newsletter

What is your link to Autism?.....

Which of the following best describes your situation;

I am a person with Autism / Aspergers Syndrome

A member of my family has Autism / Aspergers Syndrome

I am a professional / volunteer working with someone with Autism / Aspergers Syndrome in;

Education Social Work Health

Employment Other

If other, please state what

.....

Autism Jersey
The Bridge,
Le Geyt road,
St Saviour,
JE2 7NT

Freephone; 0800 735 1070
Tel; 01534 449128
Fax ; 01534 449129

Email ; admin@autismjersey.org