



BORDERS **A**SPERGER & **A**UTISM **G**ROUP **S**UPPORT

Recognised Scottish Charity No; SC 032508

www.baags.co.uk

baags@btconnect.com

Phone; 01896 668961

1 Cotgreen Road

Tweedbank

Galashiels

TD1 3SG

Chairman's' Report 2016

Thank you to those who have once again given their support to us and the encouragement to keep doing what we do.

This past year has been a very difficult one for us on a personal level, and has given both Rodelle and Myself many hours of uncertainty about what we do and how we continue. There have been a lot of people around us who have given their encouragement, support and friendship which has pulled us out of some of the worst moments.

We have however had to face up to reality – times are changing, need for support is changing, the type of support we can offer is changing – can we commit to meet those changes? For BAAGS to continue another year we have to change – we have to make changes where they are needed to enable us to reach the people who need us the most.

In 2015 we continued to run our monthly meetings – we have continued to answer telephone calls, to meet with families/individuals and professionals at places/times to suit them, we have continued to use social networking to answer questions and give our support. We have organised training workshops, seminars and tried to continue to help people learn & understand autistic behaviours. We have organised the Bouncy Days to enable the young people to experience the joy and freedom of play without fear, judgement or prejudice.

In 2016 we will still be available to offer that support, encouragement and advice – the monthly meetings will still continue, the training & workshops will continue – so long as there is a demand/need. BUT we need the families, the individuals and the professionals to let us know if they need us – they have to come forward and let us know if they still want/need the meetings, training or support. We will stop assuming that they do. Maybe things have changed so much from 1998 – the year we first formed – maybe people don't need the level and type of support etc that we are still giving – maybe it is BAAGS who have become out of date and not delivering what and where it is needed?

One area of our work is the Carer-Van, without a doubt this is one of our most successful projects, the fact it continues to be in demand with bookings for 2017 being made – shows that respite facilities are needed.

We have listened to the people who use the Carer-Van, we have taken on board the feedback generally from parents & carers – they have told us that they are getting older, their children are getting older, and their needs and types of respite needs to become adapted to those changes.

Patron: GEORGE KENNEDY

This has led us to look at the future of respite we can offer – another caravan? After a lot of research, finding a similar style facility such as the Carer-Van – but more adapted to the older mind-set has proven to be challenging and thought-provoking! Valuation and feedback have shown that the seaside/coast is ideal, the holiday park style is ideal, the Carer-Van could be improved to a more stable and spacious style of unit.

We have hit on the Lodge idea!!!! A Holiday Lodge – solid construction, spacious but luxurious inside, situated on the coast but in a smaller style park – still family friendly and with similar amenities – but maybe a bit quieter and less younger children. Pease Bay Holiday Park ticked all the boxes required, seaside, cliff-top walks, surfing, wildlife, nightlife. All we need to do now is raise the money needed - £100,000. Now this sounds a lot – but would cover all estimated expenses and running costs for the first year, allowing us to build up the clientele gradually and still meet the financial commitments such as insurance, site fees, utility bills, maintenance etc.

A business plan will be drawn up which will help potential funders see the whole picture, see that we have the experience of the Carer-Van under our belt and know that we are committed to the Group and the families.

We also need the general public to step in and help us – fundraising supporting and donating – we need everyone to help us reach this target.

And on that aspiring note I will close...please think about how you could help us to raise the money...the Lodge would be the place for the older individuals with autism, the older parents, carers, families – the place they can grow into, the place for the future.

Derek Purvis
Chairman