

1. Objectives

Autism Bucks exists

- a. To act in support of autism in general and currently for the benefit of autistic adults, their carers and families, especially those who are resident in Buckinghamshire.
- b. To aim to inspire, inform and involve the community in relation to autism.
- c. To provide a valuable reference source of information relating to autism
- d. To promote awareness of autism by presentations, lectures, meetings and communications
- e. To provide a point of contact for its members for issues and questions relating to autism.
- f. To provide opportunities for members to meet for the purposes of peer and social interaction.

Note that the limitation expressed in objective (a) above will not preclude the charity acting in support of autistic individuals, their families and carers where the individual is not yet considered to be an adult.

2. Operation

Autism Bucks will achieve the above through the following activities

- a. The ownership and operation of a website designed to serve as an up-to-date hub of information relating to autism and activities within Buckinghamshire and neighbouring areas.
- b. The creation and maintenance of a membership list, to form the basis for communications on events relating to autism
- c. The presence of the charity on social media to further promote communications
- d. The organisation of meetings and events to allow networking opportunities for members
- e. The preparation and delivery of presentations to train and promote awareness of autism and the work of the charity
- f. Attendance at events for the purposes of promoting awareness of autism and the work of the charity
- g. Attendance at meetings and events for the purpose of learning and developing knowledge and skills for the benefit of the charity.
- h. Preparation and delivery of marketing material to raise awareness of the charity
- i. The charity will form and develop relations with governing bodies with local responsibility within Buckinghamshire and organisations such as other charities working in similar locations or subject matter.

3. Powers, governance and finance

Autism Bucks expects the following aspects to be required in order to deliver the aforementioned activities:

- a. The charity will operate legally and within the guidelines set out by the Charity Commission, specifically as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- b. It will operate through the activities of its trustees, employees and suppliers.
- c. The trustees will be formed from a group of individuals with requisite skills, knowledge and accreditations acting on a voluntary basis to perform the duties required by their general and specific roles according to documented role descriptions and this constitution.
- d. The charity will employ individuals in the delivery of its services.
- e. Some aspects of the work may also be outsourced to third party suppliers at the discretion of the trustees from time to time.
- f. The charity will operate within the framework provided by this constitution and supporting policies and procedures that may be created to provide sound governance and conduct in its operation.
- g. The trustees will have the responsibility of raising the funds to meet the operational costs on a not-for-profit basis.
- h. In the event of there being charges for membership and / or attendance at events organised by the charity, this is to ensure that the costs of an event are recovered.
- i. The activities of the trustees are to be delivered on a voluntary basis, but reasonable out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed.
- j. The membership list and supporting detail will be subject to protection and regular review in accordance with data protection regulations.
- k. For the purposes of financial dealings, the charity will operate a bank account held in the name of the charity. Two trustees will be required to authorise any payments, and these will be limited to the trustees holding one of the following key roles
 - i. Chairperson
 - ii. Treasurer
 - iii. Secretary (as a reserve for the other two).
- l. Further details of the financial operations of the charity are given in the Autism Bucks Finance Policy document.

4. Organisation

The charity involves trustees, employees and members.

- a. Trustees

The trustees are unpaid volunteers who are prepared to give their time, knowledge, connections and skills for the benefit of the charity and are subject to the generic Trustee role description.

It is planned that there will be a minimum of 4 trustees working on a voluntary basis to run the charity.

- i. The board of the charity will be made up of the trustees and will include the following key roles
 - Chairperson
 - Treasurer

- Secretary
 - Operations – service delivery, campaigns and fundraising
 - Human Resources
- ii. In addition to the above, trustees will have roles and responsibilities assigned to them by the board from time to time.

The appointment of new trustees and the departure of existing trustees will follow the procedures set out in the Autism Bucks Trustees Guidelines document.

In the event of a disciplinary matter involving a trustee, the trustee will have a right to a hearing before any final decision is made. In the event of a situation where a trustee needs to be asked to leave the charity, then this will be agreed by a two-thirds majority vote.

In the event of a key role not being filled, or becoming vacant, that responsibility shall pass to the chairperson in the first instance, until a replace can be appointed. The chairperson will retain the responsibilities but reserves the right to share the duties with other trustees subject to mutual agreement

b. Employees

The employees will be employed on a zero hours contract initially to maintain the internet presence of the charity, working on the basis of a few hours a week, as directed by a single trustee with the specific responsibility for them.

c. Members

Membership is open to individuals aged 16 and over, through membership of one of a set of affiliated groups.

Details of the recognised groups and subscription rates for membership and attendance at meetings and events can be found in the Autism Bucks Finance Policy document.

The members will receive benefit of communications about events and matters relating to autism in general and autism in Buckinghamshire and neighbouring areas specifically.

Members will also be able to attend meetings and events organised specifically for their benefit within the county.

It is the right of the trustees to decline membership and or attendance at the charities events to individuals for example, where it is identified to be not in keeping with the spirit of the charity.

5. Meetings

Trustee meetings will include

- a) An Annual General Meeting, to which members will also be invited, and similarly Special General Meetings should circumstances require them.
 - i. The AGM and any other General Meeting shall be open to all trustees and members

- ii. Fourteen days' notice is required for any General Meeting, with an agenda being issued of the business to be covered.
- iii. The AGM will be held in the month of March each year.
- iv. The business of the AGM shall include the approval of the accounts, reports from the trustees on the key roles and the appointment of auditor and key roles for the coming year.
- b) Regular formal meetings (Quarterly) to review the work of the charity; progress against plans and to review budget and accounts
- c) Regular formal meetings (Monthly unless otherwise required) to progress the operation of the charity, form and agree policy and direction and authorise payments.
- d) Occasional and informal meetings to cover specific aspects of operation, which may be attended by a sub-set of the trustees, but will not have the power to make policy or authorise payments unless there is a delegated authority for such.
- e) Meetings with other bodies to further the work of the charity

At formal Trustee meetings, there will need to be at least two thirds of the trustees for the meeting to be quorate. Voting will be on a majority basis and in the event of a tie, the chairperson will hold the casting vote

At the AGM, at least two thirds of the trustees and all key roles must be represented. Attendance by the chairperson, Secretary and treasurer are mandatory. All members in attendance will have a single vote on any item. Voting will be by show of hands with a two thirds majority required to accept any motion.

6. Governance

a) Applicable regulation and accreditation

The charity will be subject to

- i. The prevailing laws of Great Britain and Ireland
- ii. Regulation and accreditation by the Charities Commission
- iii. Local governance and requirements from the Buckinghamshire County Council and NHS

b) Governance framework

The charity will form a governance framework comprising

- i. The Autism Bucks constitution
- ii. The Autism Bucks Operational Framework, including a set of policies, procedures and role descriptions governing the activities of its trustees, employees, sub-contractors and members.

c) Roles / responsibilities

The charity will create and maintain a set of role descriptions for key roles and responsibilities and will assign these roles to its trustees. These key roles include those of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Operations lead and HR lead.

7. Amendments to the constitution

Any changes to this constitution must be approved at the AGM or a Special General Meeting.

Any changes to this constitution will be communicated to the Charities Commission.

Any changes to the constitution will be communicated to the trustees and members.

8. Dissolution

The charity may be wound up by agreement at any General Meeting by a two thirds majority of those trustees and members present.

In the event of the charity being dissolved, any assets remaining after all debts have been paid shall be passed on to another charity or community group with similar aims. Should no other group be identified or agreed upon, the assets will be passed to the Charities Commission.

In the event of the charity being dissolved with debts remaining, it is expected that the trustees will not be held liable as the charity is formed as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

9. Approval

The following Trustees have reviewed this Constitution and hereby agree to adopt it as a governing document of the Autism Bucks charity.

Dated 22nd August 2018

Trustee Name	Signature
Martin Hillier (Chairperson)	
Martin Hollett	
Laura Lloyd	
Stuart Noble	