



# **Access-Ability Communications Technology**

**Trustees' Annual Report**

**&**

**Financial Statements**

**for the year**

**1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011**

**Vice-Presidents:** Lord Low of Dalston CBE Ann Darnbrough OBE

**Founder:** Ken Carter

# Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2011

## Reference and administrative information

**The name of the charity:** Access-Ability Communications Technology.

**Other names by which the charity makes itself known:** AACT (pronounced 'act') & AACT for Children.

**The charity registration number:** 1113302

**The company registration number:** 5538092

**The address of the registered offices of the charity:** 3 Wesley Gate, Queens Rd, Reading, RG1 4AP

### **The names of the charity's trustees on the date this report was approved:**

Professor James Crabbe (Chair)  
Dr Alison Black (from 11/10/11)  
Adrian Ellison  
Annette Haworth  
Dr James Ohene-Djan

### **Name of any other person who served as a charity trustee in the financial year:**

Michael McAleenan (resigned 26/1/2011)

**Accountant:** James Cowper, 3 Wesley Gate, Queens Rd, Reading, RG1 4AP

**Bank:** CAFBank, 25 Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4JQ

**Insurance broker:** CaSE Insurance, James House, Emlyn Lane, Leatherhead, KT22 7EP

## Structure, Governance and Management

**The nature of the governing document:** Memorandum and Articles of Association

**How the charity is constituted:** as a company limited by guarantee

**Methods for new trustee recruitment:** personal knowledge of professionals in the IT and communication disability fields

**Methods for new trustee appointment:** by members as laid down in the Articles of Association. The Trustees have recently set a target of increasing the size of the Board to at least eight trustees with a policy of actively seeking professional members in specific areas.

## Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 4(6) of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the charity in the year covered by this report.

## Risks

The rate of decline in income from trusts and foundations over the past two years prompted the trustees to undertake an in-depth analysis of risks, helped by guidance published by the Charity Commission. Lack of unrestricted income and lack of focus were identified as particular risks. Steps have been agreed to mitigate these: first, by ensuring that unnecessary spend on administration is avoided and by settling on a modest but certain plan to provide basic background funding for the next eighteen months; second, by agreeing stronger policies on project initiation, management and assessment to increase focus on outcomes for beneficiaries.

## Strategy

The Board held two facilitated sessions specifically to review strategy in view of both the current economic climate, and the rapid and continuing advances in technology. It reaffirmed its strategy of working in partnership with professionals and produced an outline plan which gives increased emphasis to individual project resourcing and planning.

## Trustees

**Induction:** Potential new trustees are invited to attend Board meetings. All the Charity's policies are made available and activities described through the website. A document, 'Responsibilities and duties of AACT Trustees', was agreed and published this year.

**Training:** The Board was updated on the accessibility issues of mobile IT devices through a presentation from a disability officer. Training sessions from Reading Voluntary Action and the Institute of Fundraising attended by a trustee have been helpful in clarifying volunteer and fundraising policies. A trustee attended the three day 'Lost for Words: Lost for Life' conference at City University which has provided valuable insights into, and contacts in, the SLCN (speech, language and communication needs) field. A trustee was able to observe a video training session as part of the Viewtalk project. Several trustees and volunteers took part in the iSay workshops. The Board has given the administration team responsibility to keep it updated on governance issues and any changes in charity or other relevant law.

## Objectives and activities

(a) to promote and advance the education and training of children, young people and adults who are subject to any disability associated with speech, language and different forms of communication principally for the purpose of improving accessibility and inclusiveness through the use of ICT.

(b) to advance the education of the public by providing inclusive and accessible information and training with a view to raising awareness and understanding of persons who are challenged by speech, language and communication difficulties.

Summary of activities undertaken in relation to these objectives	(a)	(b)
Training young people on how to use a video system so helping their communication skills	✓	
Improving accessibility by introducing symbolic communication to a website	✓	
Assessing accessibility of a mobile-phone system designed for children in cultural venues	✓	
Initiating a programme to increase inclusiveness and accessibility in museums	✓	
Raising public awareness of communications disabilities (talks and website information)		✓

In 2011-12, we will: assess with beneficiaries and their carers Viewtalk's potential to aid communication; complete the Awards for All pilot project (potentially continuing the scheme in some form should the results prove beneficial); enhance the website for symbol-assisted input from beneficiaries; formally launch the iMuse programme; undertake a project with a partner museum and start another.

## Achievements and performance - charitable activities

### AACT through Viewtalk



This project is running through to December 2011 with half of the work being funded by a grant from the Awards for All scheme and half being undertaken by three volunteers. It is working with special schools in partnership with Correspondent Corporation Ltd to trial the use of computer-aided video communication by 25 children (alongside 75 parents and teachers) to help them build confidence in communication. From preliminary observation, the children are finding the training sessions both stimulating and enjoyable.

A student videos an interview with a classmate

### Symbolic aids



help to



communicate

Thanks to helpful input from delegates to a workshop in November, a student website project tried out content management and Widgit symbolic input systems. The prototype system was used at a workshop in March. The Charity's website is being upgraded to include symbolic aids, enabling increased understanding by, and interaction with, those who have difficulty in communicating through written text.

### Museum accessibility



Through AACT's partnership with the iSay project, a volunteer worked with a museum to assess the functionality and accessibility of a mobile phone-based visitor information system. While it was felt that this system had some accessibility issues, the experience encouraged investigation into new ways of making information accessible to visitors, using their own or loaned mobile devices and PCs. As a result, the iMuse programme has been initiated. This will work with museums, disability and IT professionals to investigate sustainable/affordable ways that smaller museums can present information to visitors who have communications difficulties.

Using mobiles, visitors can easily alter text size and use symbolic aids and audio if they wish

### Raising public awareness



AACT joined the national 'Hello Year of Communication' campaign and is planning an event during the campaign's month of 'It's not just words'. An assistant produced video-clips on communications disability themes. Information gathered during the iSay project is being 'translated' to symbolic form for publication on the website.

Talks on IT and communications disability were given to a school and to a social club and a lecture on website accessibility was given to first-year IT degree students using AACT's as a simple example of pitfalls and remedies.

## Achievements and performance - fundraising

### Trusts and foundations



A bid to the Big Lottery Fund, Awards for All scheme was successful. Two grants from other trusts have been most helpful in enabling basic costs to be met. Due largely to the voluntary effort of our Founder, the cost of raising funds from trusts was very low at only 5% against an average reported by *Fundratios* of around 11%<sup>1</sup>. Fundraising costs have been met from other, unrestricted funds.

### Individual giving



Funds raised from a sponsored event were considerably improved compared to the results obtained previously, with a volunteer and a trustee-cum-runner administering our entry to the British 10K Run, achieving a return almost exactly on the reported average 70%<sup>1</sup>. Talks from two of our assistants to a women's club on their work for AACT also raised unrestricted funds. Use of Justgiving proved helpful, and we have recently joined their text donation service plus the new BT MyDonate service to further enable individual donations whilst minimising overheads. In total, over 120 individual donations were received, an encouraging increase on the dozen received last year.

### Partnership



The iSay programme brings with it enough funding to start projects with some trial museums and beneficiaries in 2011-12. There have been no costs to the Charity associated with raising this. Following our strategy of helping to leverage funds, a museum-partner was able to cite our accessibility work with them to help it bid for a major project on opening-up access to its collections.

### Other resources

**Volunteers:** AACT has been helped greatly this year by the input from seven volunteers working variously on our projects and manning the administration team.

**Resources:** We are grateful to Correspondent Corporation Ltd and a fellow charity, Deafax, for the free use of their Winkball/Viewtalk video system, to Wigit Software Ltd for a licence to use their symbols system during the student project and to the Museum of English Rural Life for use of work space.

### Financial Review

**Policy on reserves:** the Trustees have a policy of holding enough funds to cover any known future liability without relying on any future income.

**Funds materially in deficit:** none.

**This report was approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by  
[original signed by Professor James Crabbe, Chair]**

**date: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Fundraising *Fundratios: Charity Fundraising Comparison 2009*

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year to 31 August 2011

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted Funds £	2011 Total Funds £	2010 Total Funds £
<b>A Incoming resources</b>					
A1 Incoming resources from generated funds					
A1a Voluntary income	1	2,807	19,580	22,387	5,448
A1b Activities for generating funds					206
A1c Investment income	2	19		19	17
Total incoming resources		2,826	19,580	22,406	5,671
<b>B Resources expended</b>					
B1 Costs of generating funds					
B1a Costs of generating voluntary income	3	(1,150)		(1,150)	(1,412)
B1b Fundraising trading cost of goods sold + other costs					(67)
B2 Charitable activities	4	(269)	(10,864)	(11,133)	(6,698)
B3 Governance costs	5	(505)		(505)	(214)
Total resources expended		(1,924)	(10,864)	(12,788)	(8,391)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		902	8,715	9,618	(2,720)
<b>C Transfers between funds</b>					
C1 Gross transfers between funds	6	(11,961)	11,961		
Funds brought forward		14,083	445	14,528	17,248
Total funds carried forward		3,024	21,121	24,145	14,528

## Balance sheet at 31 August 2011 (company number: 5538092)

	2011	2010
	£	£
<b>B Current assets</b>		
B2 Debtors	2,000	
B4 Cash at bank and in hand	24,268	15,434
Total current assets	<u>26,268</u>	<u>15,434</u>
<b>C Current Liabilities</b>		
C1 Creditors	<u>(2,123)</u>	<u>(906)</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>(2,123)</u>	<u>(906)</u>
<b>Net assets (all current)</b>	<u>24,145</u>	<u>14,528</u>
<b>E The funds of the Charity</b>		
E2 Restricted Funds	21,121	445
E3 Unrestricted Funds	3,024	14,083
<b>Total Funds</b>	<u>24,145</u>	<u>14,528</u>

### Audit Exemption Statement

#### Directors' statement

For the year ending 31st August 2011 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 11 October 2011 and are signed on their behalf by [original signed by Professor James Crabbe, Chair]

## Notes to the financial statement for the year ended 31 August 2011

	Unrestricted	Restricted	sub total
	£	£	£
Note 1			
Donations from Trusts and Foundations	450	9,580	
Donations from individuals	2,357	10,000	
			22,387
Note 2			
CAFBank account interest	19		
			19
Note 3			
Justgiving	-214		
Assistant to voluntary fundraiser	-400		
10K sponsored run	-513		
5% commission to professional fundraiser	-23		
			-1,150
Note 4			
General:			
Insurance	-189		
CRB checks	-40		
Selective mutism meeting	-16		
Filestore	-25		
Virtual Learning: Assistant for web material		-1,000	
Assistance for website upgrade		-600	
Symbolic software licence		-948	
Website server service		-85	
Domain name		-9	
AACT through Viewtalk: Consultants		-7,218	
iMuse Programme: Conference		-120	
Equipment		-868	
Domain names		-14	
Stationery		-2	
			-11,133
Note 5			
Stationery, printing and postage	-170		
Volunteer administrator attending Board meetings	-33		
Bank statement	-1		
Independent examination	-300		
			-505
Note 6			
Transfer of Virtual Learning funds (correction)	-11,961	11,961	
			0

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Access-Ability Communications Technology**

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 August 2011 which are set out on pages six to eight.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to an audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, as amended); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charitieshave not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

[original signed by Alex Peal]

Alexander Peal BSc (Hons) ACA  
Chartered Accountant  
James Cowper LLP  
3 Wesley Gate  
Queens Road  
Reading  
RG1 4AP

Date.....