

NASS

National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society

Report and Accounts
for the 18 month period ended
31 December 2009

Registered Charity Number 272258

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Trustees

The Trustees of the Society are:

Hedley S Hamilton (Chairman)

Simon H Frost (Treasurer, appointed November 2008)

Eric N C Eustance FCMA MCT (Treasurer until November 2008; continued as Council member)

John Boyle (Elected November 2009)

Brian Bowman MA

Dr Andrei Calin MD FRCP

Dr Anthony Clarke BSc MB FRCP

Stephen Dean

Barbara J Foster

Peter Harmsworth (Resigned November 2008)

Claire Harris

Ben Hoare (Elected November 2009)

Dr Richard Jacoby MD FRCP

David W Lavington

Juliette Leach

Dr Athimalaipet Ramanan

Harry J Sharpe (Died May 2009)

Dr Millicent Stone MB MRCP MSc (Resigned August 2009)

Phil Street (Resigned November 2008)

Peter Wheatley-Price

Professor Paul Wordsworth

Director: Jane Skerrett

Accountants: Felton Pumphrey, 1 The Green, Richmond TW9 1PL

Bankers: Barclays Bank, 73-75 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2UZ

Solicitors: Russell-Cooke, 2 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AB

Chairman's Report

Staff and Volunteers

This has been a period of growth and change for NASS as predicted last year. Over the 18 months, NASS has recruited 3 new members of staff, taking the number of full time staff up to 5. I would like to thank the staff, under the leadership of the Director, Jane Skerrett for their hard work and commitment.

NASS is also grateful to benefit from the support of a number of volunteers: they include everyone who helps to run one of our local branches around the UK, which number around 94. We are also very grateful to the physiotherapists who help to run the branches which, put simply, cannot function without them. We are also grateful to those volunteers who come in to the head office to assist with administrative tasks: Mo Cowpe, Judy Jackson, Becky, Lindy and Tom Storer, Sally Vintner, and Christine Wheeler. We are also grateful to the NASS members who provide advice and input on particular topics, attend public meetings and provide support and information to other people with AS.

The death of Harry Sharpe

It is with great sadness that I record the death of Harry Sharpe who had been a member of NASS since 1984 and on the Council since 1992. Harry died very suddenly in the spring of 2009 when he was on holiday in the USA with his wife Jennifer, visiting their 2 sons. Harry was a warm and generous man and we will miss him very much.

Trustees

I would like to thank all the NASS Trustees for their work which extends beyond attending the 4 Council meetings a year. I would like to put on the record our particular thanks to the new treasurer, Simon Frost, for all his hard work this year on branch Gift Aid.

Executive Committee

One of the innovations over this period has been the new Executive Committee. The Trustees have appointed a sub committee formed of 5 Trustees to act as an Executive Committee to meet regularly, to act in accordance with policies set by Council and to deal with the administration of the Society in accordance with the Constitution.

Medical Advisory Board

The Trustees have also approved the establishment of a medical advisory board to consist of healthcare professionals (some of whom may be Trustees) to advise the Director, members of the Society and members of the public on AS and related conditions. The board has no decision making powers in relation to the Society's affairs.

The pace of change in this area of rheumatology continues to be rapid: it is important that NASS responds to these changes and where possible, seeks to drive change which will bring an improvement in the treatment of AS and the outlook for everyone in the UK who has this condition.

Hedley Hamilton
Chairman

22 May 2010

Director's Report on the year

Research

Oxford

Research is a key area of our activities. NASS has for many years provided support for the work on the genetics of AS carried out at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) in Oxford through our small research grant programme but most importantly of all by recruiting NASS members to provide the genetic samples without which this vital work cannot take place.

In January 2009 around 1,000 new and long standing members of NASS were mailed asking them to give a genetic sample and we had, as usual, a tremendous response.

Recruitment to this programme is ongoing through the use of the NASS website. A major recruitment drive took place in September 2009 when 4,676 NASS member were mailed. The feedback from NOC is that this produced an excellent response. We do not have an exact figure for the response as members are asked to contact NOC direct to preserve confidentiality.

In June 2009 NASS also gave a grant of £15,000 for a DPhil student, David Harvey, to work on the role of ERAP1/ARTS1 in AS at NOC.

Swansea

Researchers in the School of Medicine in Swansea University, led by Dr Stefan Siebert and Dr Sinead Brophy, were awarded a £200,000 grant by the Medical Research Council (MRC) to study AS and its effects on people with the condition who live in Wales. NASS was a co-applicant for this grant and is working with the team at Swansea on this project: the first questionnaire went out in May 2009.

Arthritis Research Campaign (arc)

The Director and 2 members of NASS are members of the arc Clinical Studies Group on Spondyloarthropathies (arc CSG on SpA). This initiative was started in December 2007 by arc; the committee meets regularly during the year and met in October 2008, and March, July and November 2009. The aims of the CSG on SpA, among others, are to produce an effective strategy for clinical studies in the future; to give people with the conditions being considered the opportunity to comment on research proposals and to suggest areas where research would be of particular interest and concern to patients. The minutes of the meeting are on the arc website (www.arc.org.uk). NASS seeks suggestions on research topics to feed into this committee via the website and AS News, throughout the year.

Group of AS experts

The NASS director also attends the regular meetings of an informal group of healthcare and research experts in AS. There was a meeting of this group in February and September 2009 in Birmingham. The Director was invited to make a presentation at the September meeting on the topic "What are our patient's worries?"

Conferences

During the period the Director attended the biennial conference on Spondyloarthropathies in Gent in October 2008, the annual European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) conference, held in Copenhagen in 2009, in her role as an Executive Committee member of the AS International Federation (ASIF) and the British Society for Rheumatology (BSR) annual conference, held in 2009 in Glasgow. The staff of NASS attend the BSR every year and have a stall in what is known as charity

alley (the alley where all the charities associated with rheumatology appear). This year we were grateful to have the help of members of the local Edinburgh and Glasgow branches in manning the stall.

Attending BSR and other medical conferences is an opportunity for NASS staff to meet rheumatologists and health professionals, to tell them about the work that NASS is doing and to hear about the latest research and developments in the treatment of AS.

The Chairman and Director attended the biennial AS International Federation (ASIF) conference in Bad Gastein in Austria in October 2009. At that meeting the Chairman was elected as Vice President of ASIF and the Director was re-elected as an ordinary member of the ASIF Executive Committee.

Medical matters

After the decision from NICE on anti TNFs for the treatment of those with severe AS which came out in May 2008, we can report that access to the new drugs is still uneven in the UK but appears to be becoming more straightforward for most people who are eligible. Another anti TNF drug, golimumab, is currently waiting for a NICE appraisal and NASS will participate in this appraisal in due course. The appraisal is now likely to start in 2010. In recent months NASS has been approached about a number of clinical trials for drugs which are new for the treatment of AS and this continues to be a very positive area: for those with severe AS the current range of drugs is limited and any expansion of this number is much to be welcomed.

Campaigning

Prescription charges

NASS is a member of the Prescription Charges Coalition, a group of major charities including organisations like The Stroke Association, Diabetes UK and the British Heart Foundation. The Coalition is campaigning to hold the Prime Minister to implement his promise made at the 2008 Labour Party Conference to abolish prescription charges for all people with long term conditions, as soon as possible and certainly before the election in 2010.

Devolved governments

During the period the Director and members of NASS attended a round table discussion on AS at the Welsh Assembly, hosted by Carl Sargeant, Assembly member and Chief Whip. This was the first time an event of this kind had taken place in Wales. The director also attended a Parliamentary seminar on rheumatic diseases at the Scottish Parliament in November 2008 hosted by Mrs Helen Eadie, MSP. One of the members of Edinburgh NASS attended the meeting and gave a powerful and eloquent presentation on the impact of AS.

Education and Assistance

New role of information officer

The first NASS information officer was appointed in April 2009. The information officer has been working on expanding our information resources: both the range of topics we cover and the means by which they are available. These resources have included our first fact sheets on subjects as various as the Blue Badge scheme for drivers and Tai Chi; developing guidance for claiming Disability Living Allowance if you have AS; our first podcast and providing information on current research papers on our website. These new resources have been welcomed and well used: for example, over a 2 week period 137 copies of the 2 benefit booklets were downloaded from the NASS website.

Patient Conference and AGM, November 2009

NASS held the first conference for patients since spring 2006. This was a very successful day, attracting around 200 attendees to the University of Reading for an event which included presentations on medical topics in the morning, the AGM held just before lunch, and then an afternoon session on topics including exercise, insurance, employment issues and a presentation from the Director on her vision for NASS. NASS is very grateful to all those who made a presentation at the conference: for the first time ever, all the conference presentations are available as audio files on the NASS website so they can be disseminated to as wide an audience as possible.

Ongoing Projects

In this period NASS has also worked with the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court on an advice pack for people with AS on how to use the gym safely called Back to Action; on a survey of work issues for people with AS and on a project with a team of health professionals on how to define and highlight best practice in the treatment of AS under the title Looking Ahead: best practice for the care of people with AS. A round table discussion by experts considered the findings of the work survey in November 2009 under the title "Working with AS" and came up with a very valuable series of recommendations. The work survey will be published in the spring of 2010 and both Back to Action and Looking Ahead will be completed and launched in 2010.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists play a vital role in the management of AS: all the NASS branch members are supervised by physiotherapists when they meet for their regular weekly sessions. We owe them all a huge debt for their commitment and hard work and this also extends to the members of AStretch for their dedication and support. (ASstretch is a network of physiotherapists in the UK with a special interest in AS: www.astretch.co.uk). We are especially grateful for the input of Claire Harris who is a NASS Trustee, NHS physiotherapist and Chairman of AStretch.

The Director attended and spoke at the AStretch conference in November 2008. This is normally held every 2 years. A training session for physiotherapists with an interest in AS was held in April 2009 and NASS paid for a number of physiotherapists to attend. The training course took place at a Portsmouth hospital and ran over 2 days. This was very valuable and we look forward to further training sessions when Karen Irons and Claire Jefferies are able to find time in their busy schedules to run them.

Information for patients

One of the most important roles NASS fulfils is to provide information and support to people with AS and their families by phone, letter, and email and via AS News and the website. This continues to be a major part of our activities.

Just to give a flavour of demand, in the period March–May 2009 we sent out 1,461 patient guidebooks to institutions for distribution to patients, and 95 direct to individuals. The average monthly hits on the website was 33,000 and around 275 copies of the patient guidebook are downloaded from the website per month. Over a 2 month period we received emails on a vast number of topics: the 3 most common topics were AS and associated conditions, diet and AS and general information on the condition.

Branches

The NASS branches continue to serve an invaluable function by offering regular supervised physiotherapy during the year. There are currently 94 branches. NASS appointed the first branch officer to work on membership and branches during this period and Steve Devlin started work in this role on 1 July 2009. The focus of his role is to improve contact with the branches; to improve support for them from the centre and to develop new branches where there is scope for this to happen.

During the period the Director attended events or visited branches at Basildon, Basingstoke, Edinburgh, Glasgow Gartnavel, Lewisham, Mile End, Newport and Norwich.

Income

NASS needs to raise every penny it spends each year: we receive no government or statutory funding. We are enormously grateful to all the individuals, charitable trusts, members, and donors for all they do for NASS. We are especially grateful to all those with AS who undertake some physical challenge to raise money for us: this is an expanding group. We welcome their support for they not only raise money for NASS but raise awareness of AS. And they help to get across the vital message that AS is not a rare disease; that there are hundreds of people with AS in the UK and that with the right treatment and support from a good medical team, people with AS can live fulfilled and dynamic lives.

We are very grateful to Annie Swanston for the work she does in organising a golf day in memory of her husband, Ian. Annie has raised nearly £40,000 for NASS and we owe her, and her family and friends a great deal.

We continue to be grateful for all those generous individuals who have left NASS a gift in their will and who have helped to secure our existence for the past 33 years and for the years to come.

For this period year we owe this special debt to:

Cecil Arthur Agland
David Keith Atkinson
Henry J Bellinger
Kathleen Ann Cox
Frances Kerr
Jean Manton
Celia Redknap
Frank Wooding

We are also grateful for the support of the following charitable trusts and companies:

Bernadette Charitable Trust
CM Keyser Charity Trust
Crane Lodge
Foreman Williams-Jones Foundation
GC Gibson Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
George John and Sheila Livanos Charitable Trust
Longview Trust
Norman Collinson Charitable Trust
Pilkington Charitable Trust
Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
Sir Julian Hodge Charitable Trust
Summers and May Charitable Settlement
The Batchworth Trust
The James Wise Charitable Trust
The Sovereign Health Care Charitable Trust
The Woolf Charitable Trust
Vivienne and Sam Cohen Charitable Trust

Abbott UK
Pfizer Ltd
John Wyeth & Brother Ltd

Staff

This year has been one of expansion and change for NASS; during the period we have seen a modest growth of staff from 2 people, the Director and administrator, to 5. The assistant director, Ingrid van der Weide joined in September 2008 and the information officer in April 2009 to be followed by the branch and membership officer in July 2009. Sadly, our first information officer, Amy Claringbold found the commuting from North London too difficult and she left in August. We had very much enjoyed working with her; Amy is now expecting her first child and we wish her and her partner, Lewis, all the best for the coming months. Sally Dickinson joined NASS in February 2010 as the new information officer and we are delighted to have her here at NASS.

I am very grateful for all their work, good humour and tenacity in helping NASS through this period of change and to expand and develop as an organisation so that we can provide a better service to our members and to everyone in the UK with AS.

Jane Skerrett
Director

22 May 2010

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2009, prepared in accordance with current statutory requirements and in accordance with the Charity Commission Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2005).

The Trustees have agreed to amend the reporting date for the Society's accounts to coincide with calendar years. As a result the accounting period covered by these accounts is extended to formally end on 31 December 2009, covering a period of 18 months. From 1 January 2010, the accounting period will be the calendar year: these changes were passed at the AGM in November 2009 and were negotiated in advance with the Charity Commission.

1. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

a. Name, address and registration

The name of the charity is the National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society and its address is Unit 0.2, One Victoria Villas, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2GW. The charity is registered with the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales with registration number 272258. The charity has applied to register with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and this application is going forward and registration should be in place for 2010.

b. Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year were:

Hedley S Hamilton (Chairman)
S H Frost (Treasurer, appointed November 2008)
Eric N C Eustance FCMA MCT (Treasurer until November 2008; continued as Council member)
John Boyle (Elected November 2009)
Brian Bowman MA
Dr Andrei Calin MD FRCP
Dr Anthony Clarke BSc MB FRCP
Stephen Dean
Barbara J Foster
Peter Harmsworth (Resigned November 2008)
Claire Harris
Ben Hoare (Elected November 2009)
Dr Richard Jacoby MD FRCP
David W Lavington
Juliette Leach
Dr Athimalaipet Ramanan
Harry J Sharpe (Died May 2009)
Dr Millicent Stone MB MRCP MSc (Resigned August 2009)
Phil Street (Resigned November 2008)
Peter Wheatley-Price
Professor Paul Wordsworth

No Trustees resigned in the year and no new Trustees were appointed, other than as shown above.

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

a. Constitution

The Society is an unincorporated society and was registered as a charity in August 1976. The rules and regulations of the Society are set out in its Constitution, adopted on 18 November 2000 and amended on 17 November 2007 and 21 November 2009, approved by the Charity Commission.

b. Appointment of Trustees

Only members of the Society may be appointed as Trustees.

The Constitution permits the appointment of a Chairman, a Treasurer, a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 elected Trustees and a maximum of 4 co-opted Trustees. The Chairman, the Treasurer and the elected Trustees are all appointed by election at the Society's Annual General Meeting. The appointment of the Chairman and Treasurer is for one year. The ordinary members of the Council shall retire at the end of the third AGM next after that at which they were elected but may put themselves forward for re election if eligible This also applies to the Chairman and Treasurer. Members of the Society are widely encouraged in advance of each AGM to nominate their fellow members as Trustees.

c. Management

The Trustees meet quarterly to review matters of policy and to make appropriate judgements, directions and decisions on Society issues.

The Trustees have delegated the ongoing management of the Society to an Executive Committee of Trustees consisting of the Chairman, the Treasurer and 3 appointed Trustees. This Committee meets on a monthly basis. Day-to-day administration of the Society is undertaken by the Director and her staff.

None of the Trustees received any remuneration during the year.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

a. Objectives

The Society's Vision is to advance the interests of people affected by ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions in the UK.

The Society's Mission is threefold:

- To seek a cure for ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions, and improve their treatment in the UK;
- To promote awareness of these conditions in the UK; and
- To provide guidance, advice and information for people affected by these conditions including their families, their carers and their employers.

b. Public benefit

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

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES – continued

The Society provides public benefit in several ways:

- by promoting research into the management and cure of ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions and their causes;
- by disseminating the results of research related to these conditions;
- by working with statutory bodies and others that provide for the treatment and welfare of people affected by these conditions;
- by educating people affected by these conditions, as well as healthcare professionals and the public, on the problems related to these conditions; and
- by putting people affected by these conditions in contact with expert advisers on all aspects of these conditions.

In so doing the Society improves the lives of those affected by these conditions, particularly in relation to their ability to contribute positively to the prosperity of their communities and the country as a whole.

The Society achieves these aims by developing and adopting relevant strategies and through establishing the necessary resources and an appropriate structure to deliver these strategies.

c. Strategies adopted

In accordance with the provisions set out in its Constitution, the Trustees have adopted the following strategies to meet the Society's principal objects:

- (i) Research into ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions:
 - to facilitate research through a variety of means including campaigning, cooperation with academic centres and with pharmaceutical companies, and PR;
 - to encourage members of the Society to co-operate in research programmes;
 - to set up a grants scheme for research;
 - to communicate to members and the wider public the results of research using the most appropriate media, including AS news, websites and conferences.
- (ii) Campaigning on behalf of people with ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions:
 - to use a variety of means to increase awareness of these conditions among the public and within the healthcare profession, including such matters as early diagnosis and appropriate treatment;
 - to use a variety of means to improve access to the latest available treatments and care, in particular through lobbying elected representatives, healthcare professionals and statutory bodies;
 - to ensure that awareness of these conditions is raised with related charities and organisations so that concerted approaches can be made when appropriate including at international level.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES – continued

(iii) Education of the public about ankylosing spondylitis and related conditions:

- to provide an information service for people affected by these conditions, for the newly diagnosed, for families, for the wider public and for healthcare professionals;
- to provide a support network for people with these conditions and their families through such means as a membership network, a branch network, advisory panels, casework support and welfare grants;
- to facilitate and support training seminars and conferences for people with these conditions and for healthcare professionals.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Council have decided to implement some key performance indicators for the work of the Society and these should be in place in the coming months with the aim that they are reported on in the next annual report and accounts.

a. Risk

The Trustees have adopted appropriate policies necessary to limit or mitigate the risks faced by the Society. The principal risks are:

- (i) Loss of funds: Funds are held with various first-tier banks on a short-term basis and as a result there is little risk of loss in the short to medium term.
- (ii) Loss of income: The Society seeks to broaden and expand its income from all sources. Nevertheless the Society is dependent upon voluntary income, both at branch level and at national level, and aims to continue to increase its membership locally and nationally.
- (iii) Loss of reputation: The Society seeks at all times to maintain its independent viewpoint. Assistance received from external bodies, such as members of the pharmaceutical industry, is strictly controlled so as to ensure that independence is not compromised.

b. Subscriptions

The Society charges subscriptions to its members at national and branch level. In addition the Society operates a local branch model for group exercise and most of the attendees are national members. At national level this income is used to fund the charitable activities of the Society and to defray the costs of running the Society. At branch level the income is used almost wholly to provide to members physiotherapy treatment over and above that available to them from the NHS.

The Society has approximately 6000 members at national level and around 1000 attendees per week at branches. The Trustees actively encourage all those with AS and related disorders to join the Society.

c. Branch network

The Society has 94 branches throughout the UK. Each branch is managed by a committee comprising a Chairman, a Treasurer and a Secretary, each elected by branch members. Each appointee can hold office for an indefinite period. Branches are required to keep proper accounting records and to make annual returns to the Society each year.

The Trustees are keen to expand the branch network. However during the year no new branches were opened and 4 closed down.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE - continued

d. Fundraising and Grants

The Society holds fund-raising events from time to time and also welcomes the efforts of individual members who undertake fund-raising activities on behalf of the Society. The Society also solicits grants from charitable trusts and from the pharmaceutical industry, subject to certain limits in order to protect the independence of the Society. In particular grants received from the pharmaceutical industry are limited to 25% of income of the average charity income over 3 consecutive years and must be made available for the support of the Society's charitable activities without restriction.

The following unrestricted grants were received from the pharmaceutical industry:

Abbott UK	£35,000	(2008 - £ 10,000)
Pfizer Limited	£ 6,000	(2008 - £ 7,000)
Wyeth	£ 20,000	(2008 - 0)

e. Expenditure on Research

The Society incurred total costs of £38,120 (2008 - £ 10,443) on research activities during the period which included support costs of £21,707 (2008 - £ 9,822). Direct costs included a £15,000 grant to a DPhil student carrying out relevant research, of which £5,000 was provided from the Fergus Rogers Fund.

The Trustees are keen to foster continued research into AS and related conditions, and expenditure in this area is likely to increase in the coming years.

f. Expenditure on Campaigning

The Society incurred total costs of £29,370 (2008 - £14,132) on campaigning activities during the period which included support costs of £18,993 (2008 - £ 8,088).

The Trustees expect to continue the Society's efforts to campaign on a wide range of issues on behalf of members concerning AS and related conditions, and expenditure in this area is likely to increase in the coming years.

g. Expenditure on Education and Assistance

The Society incurred total central costs of £199,473 (2008 - £91,955) on education and support activities during the period which included support costs of £146,520 (2008 - £63,552).

In addition the Society incurred branch costs of £246,873 (2008 - £155,517) in support of these activities.

The Trustees have now employed additional staff to continue to broaden the Society's work in these areas and this will increase the level of expenditure in this area in the coming years.

h. Volunteers

The Society is heavily dependent on volunteer members who provide support at branch level and at national level. Volunteer members are unpaid and the Society's accounts do not reflect the value to the Society of the many hours work provided free to the Society. The Trustees are fully conscious of this value and recognise that the work of the Society would be considerably curtailed without the support provided by volunteer members.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE – continued

i. Organisational relationships

The Society is a member of the following organisations:

- The All Party Parliamentary Inflammatory Arthritis Group (APPIAG). The Society is represented on the Advisory Board of APPIAG.
- The Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA).
- The Ankylosing Spondylitis International Federation (ASIF). The Society is represented on its Executive Committee by the NASS Chairman, Hedley Hamilton, who is the Vice President of ASIF and by the Director who is an ordinary member.
- The Long Term Conditions Alliance (LTCA).

The Society has also worked closely with the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS) and values the constructive co-operation between the 2 organisations highly.

j. The Future

The Society has some exciting plans for 2010. They include further development of the information resources for patients and their families; the launch of the guidance pack on exercise for people who are just diagnosed; the launch of the best practice guidelines as a result of the collaboration between a group of health professionals and NASS, and further work in the devolved regions and at the Westminster Parliament. Developments in AS are taking place at a great pace both in the treatment and understanding of the condition: NASS must strive to respond and direct these, wherever this is appropriate, so that we provide an effective voice for our members and everyone in the UK with AS.

5. FINANCIAL REVIEW

a. Reserves

The Society has invested part of its reserves in acquiring a leasehold office building in order to facilitate the activities of the Society. Free Reserves, defined as the balance of unrestricted funds less the amount invested in the office building, are maintained at a level sufficient to meet all anticipated outgoings of the Society for the next 12 months.

b. Gift Aid

During 2009 the Society concluded its negotiations with HMRC on Gift Aid claims made by a number of NASS branches during the years 2000 to 2008, where HMRC felt that part or all of the claims did not properly comply with Gift Aid regulations. This resulted in a formal settlement agreement under which the Society agreed to repay part of the claims together with interest thereon, totalling £81,719. The Trustees agreed that this cost should not be borne by branches and this amount has therefore been charged to Unrestricted Funds.

In addition the Society has adopted revised procedures for claiming Gift Aid.

c. Investments

The Society has hitherto adopted a policy of maximising liquidity and therefore funds available have been held in interest-bearing bank accounts or equivalent short-term deposits at varying rates of interest placed with first-tier banks. The Trustees announced last year their intention to review this policy during 2009. However the effect of the current economic recession and related downturn in investment performance has delayed this review which will now take place in 2010 or at such time as economic stability returns.

5. FINANCIAL REVIEW - continued

In the meantime the Society has been able to avoid any losses on investments which situation has widely affected the charity sector in the UK. Nevertheless the Trustees are conscious that, at current interest rates, income from the Society's funds is much reduced and this situation is therefore under frequent review.

d. Summary of financial performance

In accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Financial Activities (SORP 2005), the Statement of Financial Performance in these accounts reflects in full all of the transactions undertaken by the Society's branches. This represents a change of accounting policy and the comparative figures for 2008 have been adjusted accordingly.

As a whole, the Society reported a deficit of income over expenditure of £562 (2008 – surplus of £46,308). A surplus of £26,553 (2008 – surplus of £28,358) was incurred centrally and a deficit of £22,269 was incurred at branch level.

Voluntary income was particularly buoyant in the period with significant receipts of grants and legacies. However the Trustees are aware that the current economic recession may well reduce the level of income in this area and are seeking to ensure that subscription income is maximised for future years.

Central expenditure has risen considerably in the year because staff levels have been increased to deal with the Society's increasing efforts in meeting its charitable objectives. Expenditure is set to continue to rise and the Trustees are examining opportunities to increase income to meet these costs.

6. STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE ACCOUNTS

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial activities for that year. In preparing those accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 1993. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Hedley Hamilton
Chairman

Richmond
22 May 2010

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the eighteen months ended 31 December 2009, which are set out on pages 17 to 28.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's 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. The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

It is my responsibility to:

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

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 41 of the 1993 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have 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.



John A Hamblin
Felton Pumphrey Chartered Accountants
1 The Green
Richmond
Surrey TW9 1PL

26 May 2010

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the 18 month period ended 31 December 2009

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Branch Funds £	Funds Fergus Rogers Fund £	Total 18 months to 31 Dec 2009 £	Total 12 months to 30 June 2008 £
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income	3	346,163	206,909	10	553,082	312,948
Activities for generating funds	4	62,445	25,871	-	88,316	50,928
Investment income	5	10,669	1,924	144	12,737	20,662
Incoming resources from charitable activities		-	-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources		419,277	234,704	154	654,135	384,538
Resources expended						
Costs of generating funds	6	99,184	3,936	-	103,120	52,050
Charitable activities	7	266,963	246,873	5,000	518,836	279,622
Governance costs	8	8,946	-	-	8,946	6,558
Other resources expended	10	81,719	-	-	81,719	-
Total resources expended		456,812	250,809	5,000	712,621	338,230
Net incoming (outgoing) resources before transfers		(37,535)	(16,105)	(4,846)	(58,486)	46,308
Gross transfers between Funds		6,164	(6,164)	-	-	-
Net incoming (outgoing) resources before other recognised gains or losses		(31,371)	(22,269)	(4,846)	(58,486)	46,308
Gains (losses) on revaluation of investments		57,924	-	-	57,924	-
Net movement in funds for the year		26,553	(22,269)	(4,846)	(562)	46,308
Reconciliation of Funds						
Total Funds brought forward As previously reported		718,132	-	11,515	729,647	701,289
Change in accounting policy	2	-	206,293	-	206,293	188,343
As restated		718,132	206,293	11,515	935,940	889,632
Movement for the year		26,553	(22,269)	(4,846)	(562)	46,308
Total Funds carried forward	19	744,685	184,024	6,669	935,378	935,940

The notes on pages 20 to 28 form part of these accounts.

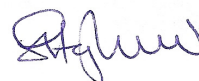
BALANCE SHEET
31 December 2009

	Note	31 December 2009 £	30 June 2008 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	364,767	351,000
Investments	12	61,027	947
Total Fixed Assets		425,794	351,947
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	13	5,425	6,554
Cash at bank and in hand	14	545,290	584,541
Total current assets		550,715	591,095
CREDITORS:			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	41,131	7,102
NET CURRENT ASSETS		509,584	583,993
TOTAL NET ASSETS		935,378	935,940
CHARITABLE FUNDS			
Fergus Rogers fund	16	6,669	11,515
Branch funds	17	184,024	206,293
Unrestricted funds	18	744,685	718,132
TOTAL CHARITABLE FUNDS	19	935,378	935,940

The accounts set out on pages 18 to 28 were approved by the Trustees on 22 May 2010.



H S Hamilton
Chairman



S H Frost
Treasurer

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Eighteen months ended 31 December 2009

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- (a) **Accounting convention:** The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of investments, in accordance with the Charities Act 1993, with the Charity Commission Statement of Recommended Practice and with applicable accounting standards.
- (b) **Designation of funds:** Restricted Funds are maintained where the funds raised are to be used for specific purposes. Accumulated surplus income, which forms the Fund's reserves, is retained in Unrestricted Funds. Reserves are maintained to meet the Fund's continuing obligations and to cater for future needs and contingencies.
- (c) **Investments:** Investments are included in the accounts at market value at the balance sheet date and unrealised investment gains or losses are reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities. Gains or losses arising during the period are included in the Statement of Financial Activities accounts when realised.
- (d) **Subscriptions, donations and legacies:** Subscriptions from members are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when received. Donations and legacies from private and other sources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when received. Gifts-in-kind are valued by the Trustees and are included at that valuation in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.
- (e) **Grants received:** Grants received from charitable organisations towards shared costs are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when received or deferred to the extent that they relate to future accounting periods. Grants from pharmaceutical companies, which are restricted to an overall limit of 25% of charity income averaged over the last 3 years, are treated similarly.
- (f) **Branch Funds:** Funds held by branches are treated as Restricted Funds as such funds are primarily for use by branch members to facilitate appropriate treatment. Transactions at branches are reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities. This represents a change in accounting policy and the effect is summarised in Note 2 below.
- (g) **Fixed assets:** No depreciation is charged on the leasehold property which was acquired on a 999 year lease of which 994 years are unexpired. Other fixed assets are depreciated at 25% per annum on a straight line basis.
- (h) **Support Costs:** Support costs are allocated to charitable activities in proportion to the estimated time expended by the Society's staff on these activities.

2. BRANCH ACCOUNTING

As stated in Note 1 the accounting policy for branch funds has changed. The comparative figures for the balance sheet have been restated and the effect is as follows:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009 £	12 months to 30 June 2008 £
Branch Funds as previously reported		
Creditors: balances at branches	188,093	183,061
Creditors: branch deposits	2,642	-
Branch Funds at the start of the year	<u>190,735</u>	<u>183,061</u>
Additional Funds not previously reported	15,558	5,282
Restated balances at the start of the year	<u><u>206,293</u></u>	<u><u>188,343</u></u>

As noted above branch transactions are reflected in the Statement of Financial Activities and comparative figures for 2008 have been restated.

3. VOLUNTARY INCOME

This category comprises income from all sources where the income is provided on a voluntary basis. It includes subscriptions, donations, grants and legacies. Where relevant the income has been increased by any Gift Aid received.

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009 £	12 months to 30 June 2008 £
Fergus Rogers Fund		
Donations	10	-
Total	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>
Branch funds		
Subscriptions	194,712	132,576
Donations	12,197	15,047
Total	<u>206,909</u>	<u>147,623</u>
Unrestricted funds		
Subscriptions	104,874	68,700
Donations and grants	187,014	92,354
Legacies	54,275	4,271
Total	<u>346,163</u>	<u>165,325</u>
Total voluntary income	<u><u>553,082</u></u>	<u><u>312,948</u></u>

4. INCOME FROM ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS

Income in this category is primarily associated with activities undertaken to raise funds to support the Society's charitable activities. It includes income from fund-raising events and from lotteries.

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009 £	12 months to 30 June 2008 £
Fergus Rogers Fund		
Fundraising events	-	11,900
Total	-	11,900
Branch funds		
Fundraising events	19,353	15,898
Other Income	6,518	9,502
Total	25,871	25,400
Unrestricted funds		
Annual draw	19,925	12,185
Fund-raising events	33,296	-
Research participation	5,711	-
Other income	3,513	1,443
Total	62,445	13,628
Total income from activities for generating funds	88,316	50,928

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

Income in this category comprises interest and dividends earned on the Society's investments and bank deposits.

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009 £	12 months to 30 June 2008 £
Fergus Rogers Fund		
Interest received	144	490
Total	144	490
Branch funds		
Interest received	1,924	2,485
Total	1,924	2,485
Unrestricted funds		
Dividends received	89	39
Interest received	10,580	17,648
Total	10,669	17,687
Total voluntary income	12,737	20,662

6. COSTS OF GENERATING FUNDS

Costs in this category comprise those costs associated with generating income from all sources. Certain costs are excluded where the source of the income is a charitable activity such as shop trading but the Society does not undertake any of these excluded activities.

	18 Months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Fergus Rogers Fund		
Fundraising expenses	-	-
Total	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Branch funds		
Fundraising expenses	3,936	2,042
Total	<u>3,936</u>	<u>2,042</u>
Unrestricted funds		
Annual draw prizes and expenses	5,188	-
Fundraising expenses	3,680	6,979
CAF administration charges	6,203	7,209
Support costs (note 9)	84,113	35,820
Total	<u>99,184</u>	<u>50,008</u>
Total costs of generating funds	<u>103,120</u>	<u>52,050</u>

7. RESOURCES EXPENDED ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

- (a) Charitable expenditure comprises all of the costs incurred by the Society in meeting its charitable objectives. These costs are summarised into the 3 main areas of charitable activity: research, campaigning, and education and support.

		18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
		£	£
Fergus Rogers Fund			
Research – grants made		5,000	7,575
Total		<u>5,000</u>	<u>7,575</u>
Branch funds			
Research		-	-
Campaigning		-	-
Education and support	[note 7(e)]	246,873	155,517
Total		<u>246,873</u>	<u>155,517</u>
Unrestricted funds			
Research	[note 7(b)]	38,120	10,443
Campaigning	[note 7(c)]	29,370	14,132
Education and support	[note 7(d)]	199,473	91,955
Total		<u>266,963</u>	<u>116,530</u>
Total resources expended on charitable activities		<u>518,836</u>	<u>279,622</u>

7. RESOURCES EXPENDED ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - continued

(b) Expenditure on research from the Society's unrestricted funds comprised the following:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Grants for research	15,000	-
AS News	1,413	621
Support costs (note 9)	21,707	9,822
Total research expenditure	38,120	10,443

(c) Expenditure on campaigning from the Society's unrestricted funds comprised the following:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Advertising	3,324	-
AS News	4,241	1,863
Other direct expenses	2,812	4,181
Support costs (note 9)	18,993	8,088
Total campaigning expenditure	29,370	14,132

(d) Expenditure on education and support from the Society's unrestricted funds comprised the following:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
AS News	22,617	9,935
Guide books and DVDs	14,540	15,395
Literature and brochures	7,394	-
Conference expenses	8,402	3,073
Support costs (note 9)	146,520	63,552
Total education & support expenditure	199,473	91,955

(e) Expenditure on education and support from the Society's branch funds comprised the following:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Treatment by healthcare professionals	190,654	122,462
Hire of NHS facilities	28,363	16,309
Grants payable	6,372	3,475
Support costs (note 9)	21,484	13,271
Total branch education & support expenditure	246,873	155,517

8. GOVERNANCE COSTS

Governance costs relate to the general running of the Society as a legal entity and are not connected with generating income or with charitable expenditure.

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Expenses paid to Trustees	4,440	1,842
Annual General Meeting costs	1,506	2,716
Independent examiner fees	3,000	2,000
Total governance costs	8,946	6,558

The Trustees received no remuneration during the period (2008 – nil).

9. SUPPORT COSTS

Support costs comprise all of the costs, except governance costs, associated with the administration of the Society and the implementation of its charitable objectives.

a) Central support costs incurred in the year comprised the following:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Staff costs (note 9c)	191,166	76,863
Premises costs	22,565	7,363
Travel expenses	10,147	2,745
IT and Communications	17,357	17,255
Office costs	19,923	8,263
Insurance, legal and professional	10,175	4,793
Total support costs	271,333	117,282

Support costs are allocated to the Society's activities on the basis of the estimated time spent by the Society's paid staff on each activity. The allocation for the period is set out below:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Charitable activities		
Research	21,707	9,822
Campaigning	18,993	8,088
Education and support	146,520	63,552
Fundraising activities	84,113	35,820
	271,333	117,282

b) Branch support costs incurred in the period amounted to £21,484 (2008 - £13,927), and are wholly attributable to education and support.

9. SUPPORT COSTS - continued

c) Staff costs incurred during the period consisted of:

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Wages and salaries	162,200	66,684
Social security contributions	16,945	7,127
Pension contributions	3,982	2,625
Recruitment and other costs	8,039	427
Total staff costs	191,166	76,863

d) The average number of employees during the period was 3 (2008 – 2)

10. OTHER RESOURCES EXPENDED

	18 months to 31 Dec 2009	12 months to 30 June 2008
	£	£
Gift Aid repaid	81,719	-
	81,719	-

During the year negotiations were undertaken with HMRC in relation to Gift Aid claims made by 26 of the Society's branches between 2000 and 2008 which in large part did not fully comply with Gift Aid regulations. These negotiations resulted in a settlement agreement which was approved by the Trustees in July 2009. Together with interest the full amount repayable under the settlement was £81,719.

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Leasehold Buildings	Office Equipment	Total £
	£	£	
Cost at 30 June 2008	351,000	-	351,000
Additions in the period	-	17,396	17,396
Cost at 31 December 2009	351,000	17,396	368,396
Depreciation at 30 June 2008	-	-	-
Depreciation charge for the period	-	3,629	3,629
Depreciation at 31 December 2009	-	3,629	3,629
Net book value at 30 June 2008	351,000	-	351,000
Net book value at 31 December 2009	351,000	13,767	364,767

No depreciation is charged on the leasehold building which is held on 999 year lease with 994 years remaining.

12. INVESTMENTS

	31 Dec 2009 £	30 June 2008 £
Bronze statues, at valuation	60,000	-
Listed shares, at valuation	1,027	947
	<u>61,027</u>	<u>947</u>

The bronze statues, by Elizabeth Frink, were acquired at a cost of £2,156 in 2009. The revaluation surplus of £59,844 has been reflected in the Statement of Financial Activity.

The listed shares were acquired as a gift from a legacy. The share certificate transferring ownership to NASS was issued on 29 May 1990. The increase in value of £80 during the period has been reflected in the Statement of Financial Activity.

13. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	31 Dec 2009 £	30 June 2008 £
Prepayments	3,154	6,554
Sundry debtors	2,271	-
	<u>5,425</u>	<u>6,554</u>

14. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	31 Dec 2009 £	30 June 2008 £
Deposit account balances held centrally	360,112	377,067
Deposit account balances held by branches	180,164	199,951
Current account balances	1,154	3,823
Cash in hand	3,860	3,700
	<u>545,290</u>	<u>584,541</u>

15. CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	31 Dec 2009 £	30 June 2008 £
Sundry creditors	16,651	1,069
Deferred income	21,480	3,517
Accrued expenses	3,000	2,516
	<u>41,131</u>	<u>7,102</u>

There are no creditors falling due after more than one year (2008 – nil)

16. FERGUS ROGERS FUND

Funds held in the Fergus Rogers Fund have been raised to support 2 areas of the Society's charitable activities: research into AS and related conditions, and welfare grants for those with these conditions. During the year £5,000 (2008 – £7,575) was expended on research. No welfare grants were dispensed in the year nor in the previous year.

17. BRANCH FUNDS

Funds held by the Society's branches are treated as restricted funds. The use of these funds is limited to the furtherance of branch activities in support of the Society's charitable activities. Amounts held by branches in excess of 2 years' normal expenditure are required to be transferred to the Society's Unrestricted Funds. No such transfers were made in the year nor in the previous year.

During the period grants totalling £1,550 (2008 - £453) were paid to branches from Unrestricted Funds and donations totalling £7,714 (2008 - £1,554) were made by branches to Unrestricted Funds.

18. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds represent the accumulated surplus income of the Society and form the Society's Reserves. These funds are expendable on the Society's charitable activities without restriction. The Society's policy on Reserves is explained in the Trustees' Report.

19. RECONCILIATION OF CHARITABLE FUNDS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Branch Funds £	Fergus Rogers Fund £	Total Funds £
Tangible assets	364,767	-	-	364,767
Investments	61,027	-	-	61,027
Debtors and prepayments	5,425	-	-	5,425
Cash at bank and in hand	354,597	184,024	6,669	545,290
Less creditors	(41,131)	-	-	(41,131)
Total charitable funds	744,685	184,024	6,669	935,378

National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society
Unit 0.2, One Victoria Villas
Richmond, Surrey, TW9 2GW
Registered Charity No: 272258