



PRESS RELEASE

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Autistic-led consortium appointed to enhance and shape charity's Inclusive Governance

Scottish Autism, Scotland's largest provider of autism-specific services and a leading authority and advocate for good autism practice, has appointed a consortium of autistic-led organisations to develop its approach on achieving inclusive governance.

The appointed organisations are the National Autistic Taskforce (NAT), Autism Rights Group Highland (ARGH) and the Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh (AMASE). Together, they have a combined experience of over 20 years in the Scottish, UK and International autistic and wider disability communities. The core project team will also have access to the wider expertise of others connected to their organisations throughout the project.

Over the next year, the project team will engage with Scottish Autism's supported individuals and their families, board of trustees, senior and wider leadership team, staff and the wider autistic community to develop an inclusive governance approach that will maximise participation amongst the charity's key stakeholders.

NAT is a UK-wide organisation, established in 2018, which is focused on giving autistic people a stronger voice in the decisions and directions of their own lives, particularly those who are less able to advocate on their own behalf. NAT's autistic directors have a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience, in social care, law, governance, research and disability rights. ARGH is a collective advocacy, lobbying and campaigning group of autistic adults based in Highland, working locally and nationally in Scotland and with international links. It promotes self-advocacy and its management committee and membership have a wide range of knowledge and experience in the fields of education, social care and mental health. Meanwhile AMASE aims to promote a better understanding of autism and encourage the growth of the autistic community through educational and community building activities.

Scottish Autism Chief Executive, Dorry McLaughlin, said: "We're delighted to have the expertise of these highly respected autistic-led organisations as we aim to improve participation in our inclusive governance. We recognise the need to develop our approach to organisational governance and ensure the voices of autistic people we support through our services and those in the wider autism community across Scotland are heard, respected and included to help shape our strategy and service delivery."



National Autistic Taskforce
Bolder Voices, Better Practice



Yo Dunn, National Autistic Taskforce Strategic Lead, commented: “We are looking forward to working with two leading Scottish Autistic Peoples’ Organisations on this ground-breaking project. Too often, autistic people have been ‘included’ only belatedly and in a tokenistic way within the wider autism world.

“We greatly respect Scottish Autism’s courage and vision in engaging professional autistic consultancy to support a root and branch review of how ‘inclusive governance’ can be realised, in a way which is genuinely co-productive, equal and respectful of autistic people’s rights.”

ARGH Chair, Kabie Brook, said: “ARGH is delighted to be working with a consortium of autistic run organisations on this project, we hope that together we can guide Scottish Autism towards their goal of being more inclusive, more accountable and indeed directed by the autistic people that they support and the wider autistic community.”

Fergus Murray, Chair, at Autistic Mutual Aid Society Edinburgh, said: “AMASE is pleased to be part of this exciting and innovative review, aimed at creating a system of inclusive governance that operates at all levels of decision making, informing and guiding Scottish Autism’s strategic and operational activities. We look forward to the principle of ‘nothing about us, without us’ being followed by every relevant organisation in future, and are excited by the opportunity to embed it throughout a leading national organisation on such a scale.”

(ENDS)

Editors Notes:

- An estimated 56,000 people in Scotland, or around 1 in 100 people are Autistic.
- Scottish Autism is the leading provider of autism specific services across Scotland, and advocate of good autism practice. Website: www.scottishautism.org
- Scottish Autism’s mission is to enable autistic people to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Scottish Autism offers innovative and highly personalised services for autistic individuals.
- Scottish Autism consistently works to raise standards of education, care, support and professional development.
- Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects the way a person communicates, interacts and processes information. Website is www.scottishautism.org
- The National Autistic Taskforce seek to draw on the collective knowledge and experience of autistic adults to inform and improve care and support, especially for autistic adults whose own voices are rarely heard. Website is <https://nationalautistictaskforce.org.uk/>
- NAT’s influential ‘[Independent Guide to Quality Care for Autistic People](#)’ provides a comprehensive, autistic authored template to good practice in care and support for autistic people.
- The website for Autism Rights Group Highland with more information about the organisation can be found here: www.arghighland.co.uk
- The website for AMASE with more information about the organization can be found here: <https://amase.org.uk/>