

**British Dyslexia Association - 48<sup>th</sup> AGM**  
 Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from 10am-11.30am  
 Held Virtually

**Trustees in attendance:**

Colin Gallick, Chair (CG); Liane Cockram, Vice Chair (LC); Patrick Elliot, Co-Opted Trustee (PE); Suzanne Edmond, Co-Opted Trustee (SE); Mark Sherin, Organisational Member (MS); Arran Smith, Organisational Member (AS); Fay Dutton, Local Association Member (FD); Delia Hazell, Local Association Member (DH); Jeff Hughes, Local Association Member (JH); Pamela Tomalin, Local Association Member (PT); Patrick Keaverney, Individual Member (PK); Michelle Catterson, Individual Member (MC)

**Key Staff in attendance:**

Nick Posford, CEO (NP); Tim Neale, Treasurer (TN); Angelique Lyon, COO (AL); Gillian Ashley, CDO (GA); Claudia Da Silva, Assistant Event Manager (CDS); Nikki Dinneen, IT (ND)

	<b>Minutes</b>
	<p><b>Apologies &amp; Introductions</b></p> <p>CG welcomed all attendees to the AGM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No apologies received.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Approval of previous minutes</b></p> <p>R1 CG motioned for approval of the minutes from the 47<sup>th</sup> AGM, held in October 2020 (<b>Resolution 1</b>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motion approved by unanimous consent.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Treasurer’s Report - Tim Neale (TN)</b></p> <p>TN discussed the financial accounts highlights for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total unrestricted income of £1,799,346; Total unrestricted expenditure of £1,784,637; Unrestricted surplus for the year of £14,709.</li> <li>Professional membership for the year increased from £39,100 (YE19) to £69,324 (YE20).</li> <li>Professional accreditation for the year increased from £53,972 (YE19) to £95,130 (YE20).</li> <li>Conferences for the year decreased from £224,210 (YE19) to £54,170 (YE20). This was due to the international conference (held every three-years), not being held during the current year. Smaller conferences continued to prosper and overall, revenues appear in line with prior years in which the international conference was not held.</li> <li>Resources from public and government authorities decreased from £49,943 (YE19) to £43,774 (YE20). Whilst this may be seen negatively, it shows the charities resilience and adaptability in being able to continue delivering a wide range of services, despite the reduction in government funding in education and disability sectors.</li> <li>Unrestricted reserves at year end of £860,699. This meets the reserve policy of retaining three-months of unrestricted expenditure, which equates to approx. £400k.</li> </ul>
R2	TN motioned for approval of accounts for 2019/2020 ( <b>Resolution 2</b> )

R3

- Motion approved by consent.

TN motioned for approval of appointment & remuneration of auditors: James Cowper Kreston  
**(Resolution 3)**

- Motion approved by consent.

**Trustee's Report - Colin Gallick (CG)**

CG thanked the trustees for their hard work and support during 19/20, with additional thanks given to TN & AL for managing the finances during this period.

Despite a hugely competitive marketplace, performance continued to be strong during the year. Measures to reduce costs were put in place at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, in March 2020. These measure, together with help from the government in terms of furlough and combined with the sterling work provided by the management team at the time (AL, LC, & GA), resulted in a successful reduction in overall costs. Virtual training was developed, and its introduction has proven successful throughout the year.

Goals from the three-year strategy plan ended in 2020, and whilst the fundamental themes are likely to continue into the next three-year plan, strategy and branding are also being considered. The BDA aims to remain relevant and modern, and to continue to be a leading dyslexia charity respected for its expertise. In a bid to be more inclusive, other areas of neurodiversity are now being considered in the development of new strategies across all areas of BDA work, by involving both its members and organisations with whom it partners and collaborates. Whilst the strategy will map out the future in more detail, confidence in continued use of digital technologies will increase audience reach and the need to invest in this area. Social media has been performing well but additional modernisation options, such as a BDA app, are not currently in place. The trustees have agreed to targeting investments towards the helpline to increase its capacity, thereby helping to serve the community in a timelier manner. Recruitment has increased over the last few months, allowing for increased capacity to focus on areas such as policies, marketing, and its website. To help continue this investment, additional funding has been targeted to support fundraising and income generation.

CG stated his gratitude to all BDA supporters for their generosity with donations, sponsorship, and volunteering.

### **CEO Report - Nick Posford (NP)**

The objective of the BDA is to provide accurate, expert information to all its audiences, and to support those with dyslexia and co-occurring differences both directly and indirectly. As a widely respected and leading charity, the staff team are conscious to honour and maintain this reputation.

#### **Key achievements during YE20**

- Campaigning for change to the benefit of dyslexic people.
- Provide advice and support to dyslexic people
- Set standards and accredit dyslexia knowledge and professional expertise.
- Disseminate and share best practice regionally, nationally, and internationally. Promoting research.

#### **Highlights during YE20**

- Joined over 140 organisations in a call to all political parties to put children and young people at the heart of the general election held at the end of 2019.
- Worked as the Secretariat at the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for dyslexia and other general learning difficulties. This provided an amazing opportunity to bring the dyslexic community together, by helping legislators to better understand the direct and indirect challenges and abilities of dyslexia. This included the publication of a report on the Human Cost of Dyslexia, with the report being the first to look at the psychological and emotional impact of dyslexia on individuals and families.
- Successfully worked on important changes to UK driving theory tests, that came into effect in April 2020. Video clips replaced written scenarios, making them more accessible as learners would be asked three questions after watching a driving clip of up to 30-seconds. This formed part of the ongoing work with the driving and vehicles standards agency to improve accessibility for people with dyslexia.
- Worked with the standards and testing agency at the Department for Education, to review accessibility of Key Stage 1 test papers for learners of various neurodiverse conditions. The panel of reviewers consisted of inclusion experts who examined the wording of questions, the layout, and the style, before providing suggestions to make tests more inclusive and accessible.
- Worked with the joint council on qualifications (JCQ) to make it easier for dyslexics to obtain a reader or computer reader for exams, with the intention to get more schools to invest in providing laptops for dyslexic pupils. Establishing text to speech technology from a younger age, would allow pupils to work in a way that is reflective of a mainstream workplace.

- Launched ‘Empowered Parents’, a guide on how to work collaboratively with schools; how to apply for an education, health and care plan; to provide legally binding support proposals; to provide practical advice on supporting a child with dyslexia at home.
- Worked with the leading online parenting forum ‘Mumsnet’ and expert in parenting dyslexia ‘John Hicks’ to produce ‘What is dyslexia and what are the symptoms?’ This is a quick video guide that explains what dyslexia is, how to support it, what help is available and how to access this help.
- BDA assessment services are now a significant offering across England and Wales, allowing individuals of all ages to access diagnostic and workplace need assessments at reasonable costs.
- Supported Merseyside NHS Trust with the launch of their dyslexia and dyspraxia network. Dyslexia networks provide a safe place for people to meet and discuss the issues that are affecting them, to tap into peer support, to decompress, to share tips and ideas, and to be open about the challenges and concerns that they face. They are also a vehicle for change, providing a united voice that works with others to improve and mainstream best practice, to support dyslexic and other neurodiverse individuals. They are good for employees to reduce stress and anxiety, and great for employers to support their employees, leading to a workforce that feels more valued.
- Continued to accredit courses for specialist teachers to study, and for their competence to be recognised through awards of ACP and ATC. The BDA also issued assessment practising certificates and teaching practising certificates for professionals within the field.
- Worked together with organisations who meet BDA standards for dyslexia friendly policies and practice, including the BDA quality mark award for schools. The dyslexia friendly quality mark provides a framework of support and understanding, to ensure that everyone within a school or organisation understands the needs of the dyslexic individual, and that appropriate resources and strategies for support are available. This in turn is likely to lead to greater levels of achievement for everyone. This award is only issued to schools or organisations that can demonstrate that they provide high quality education and/or practice for dyslexic individuals.
- BDA courses at both level 5 and level 7 have been approved by the University of Chester. This means that candidates can progress from the level 7 dyslexia course to complete an MA in dyslexia research and practice at The University of Chester. Candidates completing the level 5 dyscalculia course can then progress to The University of Chester to complete level 7 and obtain a masters in dyscalculia research and practice. Research is important, both to understand the benefits that come with thinking differently and to identify barriers that may prevent people with dyslexia from achieving their dreams. The BDA disseminates and shares best practice regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- The success of several educational conferences, along with a wide range of webinars.

- A conference on dyslexia and dyscalculia, 'Empowering Adults' was held in London. Highlights from which included, insights into the experiences of adults who are dyscalculic and the impact it has on daily life; new findings on the value of dyslexic thinking within the workplace; a demonstration of accessibility technology from Microsoft; an overall focus on empowering dyslexics to reach their potential; and exploring the benefits and importance that a neurodiverse workplace brings to employers.
- On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019, 'Dyslexia Creates 2019' took over the V&A's lecture theatre to explore the creative power of dyslexia and how to increase its contribution to the UK. The event saw presentations exploring, a new theory on why dyslexia evolved and its role in groups; the creative power of dyslexia and how dyslexics think differently; and how dyslexia shapes success.
- The Gala Dinner is an annual event and was held in December 2019. It was a great success, with a volunteer group helping to secure some excellent auction lots. The evening is always important in raising dyslexia awareness and the BDA was extremely fortunate to have had the support of high-profile people and people with dyslexia attending the event.
- The international conference is the BDA's major conference event. After the success of the 2018 conference, the planning of the 2021 conference went underway. Several options for a venue were proposed and Oxford Brooks was agreed. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 this event will now be held virtually. Bookings for the event have continued to be received and the line-up includes some fantastic speakers from across the globe. CG offered thanks to its sponsors.
- Webinars have continued to be popular and with increased publicity around dyscalculia, a record number of people have been signing up to the webinar on this topic.

During YE20, staff in the Bracknell office adapted superbly to working from home. CG offered thanks to every member of the staff team for their hard work and flexibility during a difficult time, adding that many successes reported on today had resulted from their hard work and dedication. Gratitude and thanks were given for the support of the BDA volunteers, including the helpline and those involved in committees that support all aspects of the BDA work.

### **The future is exciting!**

Surveys were carried out earlier this year to help with brand development. The creation of the next three-year strategy plan will be inclusive of stakeholder views, to ensure a broad alliance in direction. To succeed, income needs to increase to allow for a bigger impact to reach new strategy goals.

	<p>CG thanked the trustees for their investment in new staff roles which has increased both skillset and capacity. Next year sees half a century of the BDA, and whilst this will be celebrated, the BDA will also renew its commitment to removing barriers and creating a world where dyslexia, dyscalculia and all neurodiversity are celebrated and understood.</p>
<p><b>R4</b></p> <p><b>R5</b></p>	<p><b>Trustee Election results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CG thanked all candidates for standing</li> </ul> <p>Individual Member (IM) results saw Liane Cockram appointed with 14 votes. CG motioned for approval of this appointment; Motion approved by consent (<b>Resolution 4</b>)</p> <p>LDA Member Trustee results saw Georgia Niolaki (21 votes) and Helen Ross (23 votes) appointed. CG motioned for approval of this appointment; Motion approved by consent (<b>Resolution 5</b>)</p> <p>Trustees stepping down are Pamela Tomalin and Jeff Hughes. CG thanked them for their work and commitment to the BDA.</p>
	<p><b>Committee Reports</b></p> <p><b>Cultural Perspectives Committee - Marcia Brissett-Bailey (MBB)</b></p> <p>The board aims to embed inclusion and diversity across all areas of the BDA, engraining it deeply into the roots until this individual committee is no longer required. The committee highlights the need for more conversations to be held within BAME communities, to better understand the cultural differences that may limit disclosure for dyslexic individuals.</p> <p>A recent event held at the City of Westminster was attended by 64 delegates and highlighted the desire and need for BAME members to raise their profiles. By highlighting their article and publication contributions, greater strides can be made as these relatable role models take the stage.</p> <p><b>Dyscalculia &amp; maths learning difficulties committee - Peter Jarrett (PJ)</b></p> <p>There are currently no active charities for dyscalculia in the UK and it remains a relatively hidden condition. The BDA is working to change this and over the last year, the committee has focused on supporting professional workforces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In partnership with the accreditation board, AMBDA Mathematics has been developed to be delivered at The University of Chester and Edge Hill University. This will allow those working on an APL route, who hold an existing AMBDA and have significant experience of maths teaching, to gain an AMBDA Mathematics. Further advice on this will be released shortly, in partnership with the accreditation board. Working groups have considered remote assessments, highlighting</li> </ul>

the need to ensure a quality assured, confident, and competent workforce is available to support people.

- A dyscalculia conference held online last year in June 2019 was well attended and received. The next conference is planned for October 2021 and is anticipated to focus on lived experiences.

Moving forwards the committee intends, to continue to fight for better recognition of dyscalculia; to work with people with dyscalculia to ensure their voice is heard; to be a bridge between research, practice, and the lived experience; to be seen by more people and to support, advocate and inform on a wider stage.

#### **Music Committee - Sally Daunt (SD)**

SD highlighted the key task of the committee to be the dissemination of information. They deal with requests that cover dyslexia aware music teachers; reasonable adjustments in music exams; and ways of making music teaching and learning neurodiversity friendly. The committee liaises with music exam boards, specialist music schools, music conservatoires, professional organisations, and music hubs. They provide guidance on remote and online teaching, provide top tips, and help with site reading & scales. Further details can be found on the music page of the BDA website, including training via webinar.

#### **New technology committee - Arran Smith (AS)**

The committee is to change its name to the 'Technology advisory committee', as it was felt that this was more inclusive of all technologies that may be used and not just anything new. During YE20, their focus has been on supporting exam policies and helpline technology. Moving forwards, they will be looking into technology to support BDA assured.

#### **International Conference committee - Vince Connelly (VC)**

This flagship BDA conference is held to examine a broad range of international research into dyslexia and other related areas, including dyscalculia. To be held in 2021, the virtual conference will present over 100 leading experts from around the globe, contributing to the 66 presented sessions. In addition, there are 20 exhibitors, up to 9 sponsors, 16hrs of CPD content available through the workshops, and 6 keynote speakers in attendance. An on-demand library will be available for viewing over the conference duration, allowing time to network, participate in Q&A's, and interact with exhibitors, whilst not missing out on any of the presented materials.

#### **Accreditation Board - Gillian Ashley (GA)**

This board is important as it not only sits within the constitution, but it also enables professionals to qualify as dyslexia teachers and assessors that are accredited by the BDA. Accredited courses contain the main criteria that the BDA advocates as essential for learning, ‘how to be a dyslexia teacher’ and ‘how to be a dyslexia assessor’. This now includes dyscalculia. The accreditation board reviews applications from course providers, looking to develop courses for BDA accreditation. These courses are assessed by the liaison team who work closely with course leaders to ensure consistency across all BDA courses. The ‘course leaders’ sub-group meet regularly to discuss any issues, developments, and good practice. This has proven vital during YE20 with the increase in online activities, and people have turned to the BDA for more clarity and support. Any changes made by the accreditation board do not affect the integrity of the assessment criteria for the courses. The board have strived to preserve and persevere during COVID.

The BDA are working with Real Group, PATOSS, Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre and Dyslexia Action in a joint bid submitted by Real Group, for the BDA to become part of the National Tutoring Programme. The ‘Professional Tutoring Partnership’ has been formed and is currently offering 15hrs of specialist teacher tutoring to, hopefully, up to 3,000 children by July.

**Local Association Board - Lesley Hill (LH)**

Representatives from a variety of regions report back to the board. This ensures consistency across the regions, whilst providing support to share in successes and difficulties experienced. There has been a lot of interest over the last year from people wanting to set up new LDAs, this has resulted in three new regional representatives.

The introduction of an LDA funding pot over the last 18 months has proven successful in allowing LDAs to apply to help fund any project or event. LH thanked the LDAs for their contributions.

CG thanked all for attending and closed the meeting

**Next AGM to be held, Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2021**