



Ability Dogs 4 Young People

Supporting Information



1. About Our Charity

Our Charity is based on the Isle of Wight which has a population of about 143,000 of which, over 700 young adults under the age of 24 are disabled. It is also recognized as being an Island of 'Low Social Economic background'.

Ability Dogs 4 Young People IoW is helping young people and children with physical or mental disabilities, or both. We provide highly trained assistance dogs (Ability Dogs). The charity is dedicated to improving the quality of life for young people and children on the Isle of Wight with disabilities including cerebral palsy, autism, diabetes, and epilepsy. Our Ability Dogs assist and support their disabled recipients with their specific disabilities enabling them to lead fuller and more independent lives.

The Charity is dedicated to training assistance dogs for young people and children. It has become clear that an Ability Dog being present in a young person's life can have an immense and immediate impact. Many of the Charity's recipients have complex mental health disabilities including crippling anxiety and depression (often suicidal). Having an Ability Dog has given these recipients a focus and routine which helped break their cycle of self-harm and isolation – they have ultimately turned their lives around.

As well as training charity Ability Dogs, we run an 'Own Trained' programme which helps people train their own dog to assist them or another disabled member of their family. Many achieve full Ability Dog status gaining a green assistance dog jacket.

We are involved with schools on the IoW with the specific training required for School Therapy Ability Dogs. These include special and mainstream schools. The Charity now has ten School Therapy Dogs on the Island.

We run Dog Phobia Desensitization Programs for children and young people who are so anxious about meeting dogs that it is seriously impacting their lives. Our Dog Phobia programme continues to be well needed.

The Charity was started in April 2012 and has a good track record of achievements. We have forty Ability Dogs with a further fifteen at various stages of training. We are in constant contact with all our recipients and their families, and we measure success by the feedback they give us and the number of people we help across all our different programmes. The training and placement programme is monitored monthly with detailed logs for every stage. In addition, the Own Trained Ability Dog programme has helped over sixty people to increase their independence levels.



Positive Impacts of Ability Dogs are wide-ranging:

Health & Wellbeing: All our Ability Dogs are improving their recipients' health and general welfare. Many of our recipients have severe anxieties and low self-esteem, and prior to having an Ability Dog they have been in and out of hospital following attempted suicides and self-harming. With an Ability Dog, they rarely (if at all) need hospital assistance.

Independent Living: The increased self-esteem our Ability Dogs bring mean that our recipients gain enough confidence to go out and about independently. Many of our recipients have moved into independent or supported living, something they only dreamed of before they had their Ability Dog.

Respite: Generally, the whole family benefits from having an Ability Dog. It means that other family members can go out knowing the recipient is not on their own, which brings a welcome level of respite. Similarly, as the recipients can go out accompanied by the Ability Dog, the family member can stay at home, another form of respite.

Transition: Many of our recipients are able to return to education or start employment (or volunteer working) with an Ability Dog by their side. As above, some have moved into independent or supported living.



2. Financial Information

Name of Charity: Ability Dogs 4 Young People IoW
Charity Commission Registration No: 1154896
Date Registered: April 2012

Latest Accounts:

Published Accounts for the year January 2021 to December 2021

Income: £400,746	Expenditure: £368,268
Net Assets: £353,690	Free Reserves: £336,661

The assets comprise Fixed Assets of £96,868, include a charity shop at £65,000 & Trainers' vans at £23,708. At the end of December 2021, available cash in the bank was £199,899.

Draft Accounts for the year January 2022 to December 2022

Income: £389,111	Expenditure: £430,536
Net Assets: £312,275	Free Reserves: £300,275

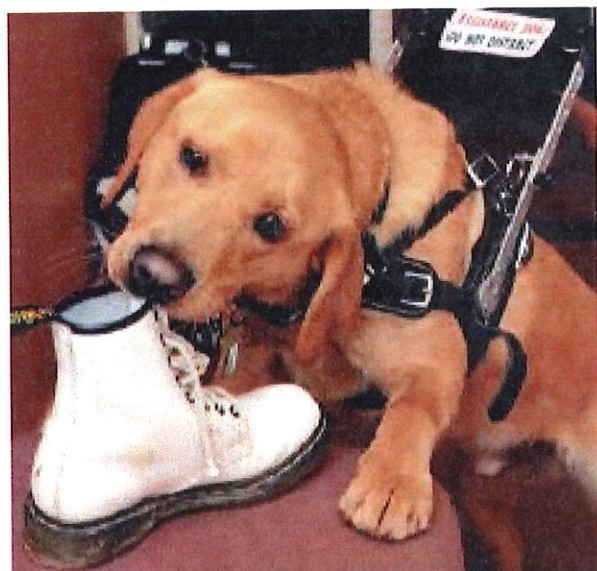
The assets comprise Fixed Assets of £80,356, include a charity shop at £65,000 & Trainers' vans at £11,276. At the end of December 2022, available cash in the bank was £181,894.

Request for Funding: We will be grateful for any amount, please.

3 Our Young People

The needs of the disabled young people and children addressed by Ability Dogs 4 Young People are broad ranging and depend on the nature of the individual's disabilities. For example, children with cerebral palsy need practical help with tasks like picking up dropped items, help with getting dressed, opening doors, going to college and socialising with friends. Those with epilepsy need an Ability Dog to raise an alarm to summon help when they have a fit, and to provide comfort and reassurance. Those on the autistic spectrum benefit from the special companionship an Ability Dog provides which has an immediate effect on their well-being, confidence and their capability to form relationships.

Unlike other assistance dog programs that cater for single disabilities, such as deaf and blind people, our dogs are trained to help with multiple disabilities and we are helping children and young people who generally need a lot of care and nurturing. To take account of this, we only place our Ability Dogs when they are at least two years of age, and therefore they are mature and easier to handle. We are taking advantage of this extended training time by working with each young person and their matched Ability Dog for about four months before placement. This means that learning can be done at the disabled young person's pace and is not fixed to a set two-week timetable, for example.



The young people and children on our waiting list have the following main disabilities, although many have complex disabilities (combining more than one disability):

Cerebral Palsy	21%
Autism or Asperger's	38%
Diabetes & Epilepsy	9%
Other disabilities	29%

The age range is 2 years to 30 years

Increasingly we are finding needing to help young people who have such crippling anxieties that they are in and out of hospital, either because of continued and escalating self-harm or because of suicide attempts. Where this is the case, we are seeing dramatic improvements when we help them, either by matching and placing an Ability Dog with them or helping them to join our 'Own Trained' program. In these cases, we are saving lives by providing them with a reason to continue. The unconditional love of an Ability Dog helps them to restart their lives. Please see our Case Studies for more detail.

Disabled Young People with Dog Phobias



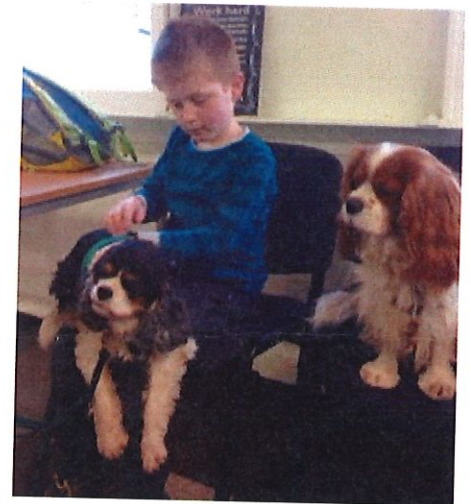
Having a phobia of dogs can build up and be seriously life limiting. The fears can build up in a child's mind such that eventually they are frightened to leave home in case they encounter a dog. It may be that they run across the road as soon as they see a dog, perhaps pulling a parent or support worker with them. Or it may stop them visiting their family if they have a dog, and in one case, the child would not go to any of her friends' birthday parties just in case they had a dog.

These needs are addressed slowly and carefully with our one-to-one dog phobia program. We build the child's trust, calmly introducing them to our trained Therapy Ability Dogs in a very controlled way. Working at the disabled child's pace is absolutely paramount and over time the children can learn how to go out and about again without debilitating fear.

People with their Own Dogs

Increasingly the needs of children with autism are being met by families getting their own dog and joining Ability Dogs 4 Young People's 'Own Trained' program. These children benefit by having a dog to help them sooner than our waiting list allows and sometimes by choosing a breed to better suit their needs.

This is not an easy option because training a puppy with a child with specialised needs in the household requires a lot of dedication. We help them by providing the knowledge and practical experience including weekly puppy classes as well as one-to-one training at home.



As this program is successful and meeting a need, in 2016 we opened up our 'Own Trained' program to people over 30 years old. Now we help people of any age who either have a disability themselves or have a family member with a disability. This means we are able to help more disabled people living on the Isle of Wight.

4. Work to be Funded – January to December 2023

General Description of the Training and Supporting Process: Brief Summary

It takes two years, from puppy to young dog, to train each Ability Dog including training the Recipient, their family and support network. Training continues whilst the Ability Dog is living with the Recipient, and our Aftercare support provides on-going monthly checks. This is a higher level of support than other assistance dog organisations provide, but our Recipients are young people who are developing year on year, and their complex needs need a high level of support.

We are taking on twelve new puppies for training every year. We have a rolling programme; new puppies start throughout the year. New matching and Recipient training starts throughout the year and therefore Ability Dogs are placed continuously. Overall, we aim to place ten to twelve Ability Dogs every year and have fifteen to twenty-five puppies and young dogs at various stages of training.

Puppy Acquisition – it is very important to select the puppies with the right potential.

Puppy Socialisation & Training (2-18 months of age) – to ensure the dogs have the best start. This is carried out by volunteer Puppy Parents with the guidance of the Puppy Training Supervisor. Ability Dog puppy and training is on-going, with much of the training in volunteers' homes and around and about the Island, and at weekly puppy classes.

Initial Ability Dog Training (1.5-2 years of age) – Ability Dog Trainers advance the young dogs' training and assess their capabilities.

Recipient Co-ordination & Matching – meetings and discussions with disabled young people and children with their families and support networks to ascertain their needs and priorities. This includes enabling interaction with our Ability Dogs at regular Paws 4 U groups at our Training Centre.

Ability Dog Training – The advanced training is carried out in the trainers' homes and around venues on the Isle of Wight.

Recipient Training – having matched each dog's capabilities with a Recipient's needs, this is the advanced and specialised training by the Ability Dog Trainers. The



recipients are trained with their matched Ability Dogs in their own homes, places of education and work as well as out and about. Once fully trained, the Ability Dogs live with their Recipients and help around the house and around venues on the Isle of Wight including colleges and places of work.

The Charity covers all the costs for the training puppies to ensure that our volunteer Puppy Parents do not have any significant expenses. Mainly they are donating their time and their love.

Similarly, the Charity covers all the costs for the working Ability Dogs to ensure that our Recipients gain all the benefits of having the assistance of an Ability Dog without worrying about extra expenses. Most of our Recipients are children and young people whose parents have to cover educational costs, or they are young adults on benefits. They do not have the resources to cover the cost of owning a dog and we do not want to exclude anyone in need.

This was a decision taken by the Charity's Trustees from the outset. It also means that, by owning and covering all the Ability Dogs costs we can ensure that their welfare needs are met to the highest standards.

Budget for 2023

Our budget expenditure for the current financial year for charitable activities is £241,500, summarised as follows:

Puppy Acquisition (12 puppies)	£20,000
Puppy & Dog Food (60 dogs & puppies)	£23,000
Health Care (veterinary, worming, supplements)	£30,000
Equipment (lead, harnesses, jackets, etc.)	£7,000
Volunteer Costs (travel expenses)	£500
Trainer costs (salaries, expenses, etc.)	£65,000
Recipient Support Costs (salaries, expenses, etc.)	£14,000
Training Centre (specifically for training)	£25,000
Admin Costs (non-fundraising)	£28,000
Charity Vans (for the Trainers, dog transport, etc.)	£29,000

Our budget expenditure for the current financial year for voluntary income generation is £23,500, and for fundraising activities is £175,000 including £150,000 relating to the charity shops (leases & salaries, etc.).

This gives a total budget expenditure of £440,000 for January to December 2023.

Summary of Costs for each Ability Dog

The first three year's costs for every puppy/young Ability Dog cover the purchase, equipment, consumables and health care, plus the trainers' time and expenses. The total is about £6,000 per year. From year four onwards the costs are for monthly aftercare, on-going training as well as equipment, consumables and health care. For year four onwards the costs are about £2,000 per year. An Ability Dog usually retires when he is between ten and twelve years old. This means the full cost for an Ability Dog from purchase to retirement is about £34,000.

A detailed Table of Cost Breakdown can be provided on request.



5. Income

Our budget income for the current financial year from voluntary income is £261,500 and from fundraising activities is £185,500 giving an overall budget income of £447,000.

Voluntary income is summarised as follows:

Donations and Gifts	£101,500
Legacies and in memory	£110,000
Grants	£50,000

Fundraising activities is summarised as follows:

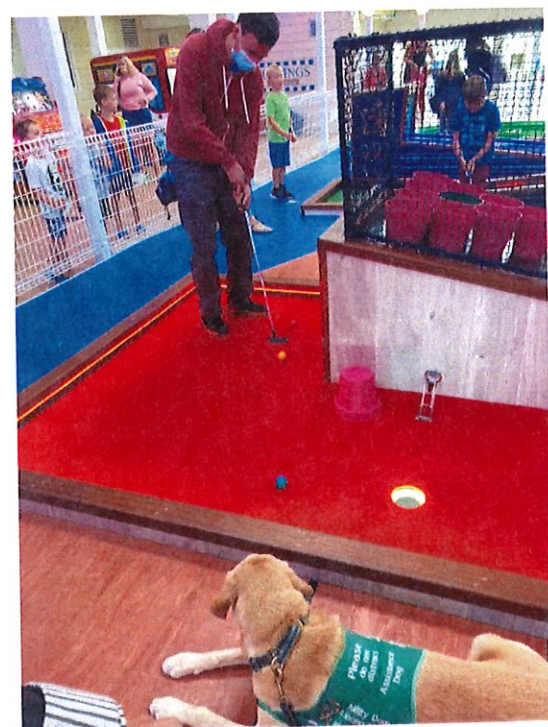
Events organised by us (Open Day, etc.)	£2,500
Events organised by others (fetes, fairs, talks etc.)	£10,000
Raffles	£500
Own Trained classes (puppy classes, one-to-one, etc.)	£3,500
Merchandise	£5,000
Recycling	£4,000
Charity Shop sales	£160,000

6. Income & Cost Risk

In the first quarter of 2023, we have raised funds of £70,000 with expenditure of £100,000. This equates to 62% of the budget income for the quarter with 90% expenditure and gives an overall shortfall of £30,000 over the first three months. Traditionally (before Covid), January was always a good month for funds because people gave us money they have raised throughout the previous year. February and March are typically slightly low-income months because our fundraising activities tend to increase during the summer months, including fetes & fairs, and our charity shops.

Looking at the annual figures, £70,000 equates to 15% of the budget income which leaves 85% to raise, about £380,000. This relies on a reasonable donation from legacies, and although we are aware of £12,000 in the next few months, legacies are unknown and unpredictable. To try and minimise this risk, we are planning to actively explore additional grant opportunities.

Based on the annual budget, the expenditure for the first quarter is about on target at 23%. We do not foresee any cost risks which will have an impact on the budget.



7. Contingency Plans

Currently we are covering the shortfall from our free cash reserves (although this is eating into our contingent liabilities, see Reserves Policy). If we continue with the same level of shortfall, average of £10,000 per month, we will have only have about £70,000 remaining at the end of 2023, which would leave the Charity vulnerable.

Rather than cost reductions (we run on quite a tight budget), we will look at other avenues of fundraising, for example, increasing our grant applications, and increasing our direct fundraising activities such as coffee mornings, auctions, and similar.

As a Plan B, we have the option to sell the Charity Shop we purchased in 2020 for about £65,000. This was purchased as an investment as well as to minimise running costs (lease costs). However, if we sell it, we lose the income stream it currently provides.

We have to be very careful about any cost reductions, as there will be longer term effects. It takes two years to train the puppies, from purchase to placement and so if we slow this process, by decreasing the number of new puppies or lessening the trainers' hours, we will see the impact in two years – this was the problem with Covid, as it continues its impact even now.

8. Reserves Policy

The Trustees agreed to reserve a support fund for each working Ability Dog to cover its costs for the next 5 years at £1,000 per year. The Charity now has 40 working Ability Dogs, requiring a reserve of £185,000. The trustees also agreed to reserve a fund for each working Ability Dog and training puppy for any significant costs of veterinary treatment and other health care. This is a form of 'self-insurance'. There are 55 dogs and puppies requiring a reserve of £55,000. Currently the charity has cash reserves is £160,000. This is much less than the preferred contingent liabilities but provides a limited buffer.

