



Ecas promotes equality, choice and integration for physically disabled people. We promote opportunities for physically disabled people to be self-fulfilled and to participate in all aspects of society. We also work to promote disability equality throughout society.

ecas.scot

CHAIR'S REMARKS



am delighted and honoured to take on this role following Caroline Loudon's retirement in May 2024, and I hope that I can do justice to the organisation and Caroline's amazing lead. I would like to thank Caroline on behalf of the whole organisation for her long involvement with Ecas. Caroline has agreed to remain on our Finance and Personnel, and Grants Committees to give that valuable continuity. Dr Alastair MacIntosh also stood down after his fifteen years on the Board. Both Alastair and Caroline have enormous experience with Ecas and we owe them a huge debt.

We are delighted to welcome Dr John Dunn, and Chartered Accountant Scott Alexander, who joined the Board in February 2024. John assumed the role of Grants Committee Chair, replacing Alastair. Scott became Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee when I become Board Chair. Board Director, Ecas service user and volunteer befriender Ian Jubb assumed the role of Vice Chair when Alastair departed. Board Director Victoria Miller joined the Grants Committee, bringing with her many years of Occupational Therapy experience.

During the year, an Ecas services review was conducted to help ensure our services remain valuable and relevant, and our service users are content with how services are being delivered. This was particularly important in the post-pandemic world, as we evolved our approach to include online and in-person opportunities to help widen access. As you can see from the page opposite, the headline responses from those involved in Activities and Befriending overwhelmingly confirmed positive outcomes, with a couple of areas for further work. See some of the wonderful creations from the art and craft groups on page 12 and 13. Grants were not included in the review, but the Board amended funding tiers in response to inflation.

The success of Ecas is entirely due to the hard work of many people: our volunteers (befrienders, Directors, committee members and those who support activities); our funders (individuals, companies and trusts); the staff; our many partners (public, private and voluntary sectors) and, of course, our service users.

Ecas is as committed as ever to doing what we do best. We very much look forward to supporting more people across all of our services in the coming year and beyond.

Andrew Herberts, Chair

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM ECAS SERVICES REVIEW:

AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN ECAS ACTIVITIES:

100%

rated their activity ***** participation as excellent



94% felt more connected

90% felt a benefit to their health and wellbeing

89% felt they had learned new skills

ECAS BEFRIENDEES (SERVICE USERS):

89% noted reduced isolation

100% gained friendship



ECAS VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDERS:

93% gained friendship

86% gained professional development





82% felt their confidence was increased 95%

felt meeting others in a

helped them

similar situation





80% felt that activities brought structure to their lives



86% gained improved confidence

100% had fun



100%

would recommend Service

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

love the seated tai chi 'action' shot from the front cover as it illustrates what Ecas activities are: a welcoming space for people to come together, to learn, feel better and have fun, however long they have been involved. Barbara (left) has been attending for 20 plus years and Rachael, a few months; the smiles say it all.

Our swimming and hydrotherapy sessions made a welcome return in March 2024 to the specialist facilities at Oaklands School, after being suspended due to the pandemic. Service users are so happy to have the opportunity to improve their strength, coordination and confidence in a warm water environment. See page 9.

Despite the wider reported 30% drop in volunteering numbers across the 3rd sector, the Befriending Team are performing well in challenging circumstances. Since the last annual report was published, the Befriending Service has made its 200th match! That's 150 volunteer befrienders and 145 service users since the service was established 15 years ago. What's also impressive is that the average match length is 19 months, which underpins the quality of the work the befriending team does regarding volunteer training, matching, and the level of ongoing support provided. See pages 14 and 15 for more information, including how you can volunteer!

Our Grants fund ended the financial year approving 52 applications with a spend of £60,410 until the end of March 2024. 10 out of the 52 successful applicants received power packs retrofitted to manual wheelchairs, a result of Ecas expanding its grant criteria in 2022. See page 16 for information and examples of the impact of those grant awards.

Lastly, Elaine Boyd, who has been involved with Ecas since 1995, provides her insight on what Ecas has meant to her over the years. Please see page 17 for the excerpt of a brilliant longer interview which, along with other articles, can be found on our website www.ecas.scot

Many thanks to all those involved with Ecas for their support.

Ally Irvine, Chief Executive

INTERESTED IN AN ACTIVITY?

Try our activities for FREE for 2 weeks and then it's only £2.30 per session!

Transport grants available. Call 07500 221618 or visit ecas.scot

ART

The creation of works of art in the two classes continued apace with portraits, still lives and landscapes as well as some work that defies categorisation! Materials of all kinds remain popular with oils, acrylics, and watercolours being utilised for painting and all the dry materials used for drawing such as felt tip pens, charcoal, graphite and coloured pencils.

Gill Cockburn and Erin Rhode Art Group Leaders ⁶⁶ Motivates me to get out the house and meet new friends and enjoy making art.⁹⁹ BRUCE

⁶⁶ I've been coming for a long time and I really do enjoy it. It's my two hours of the week.⁹⁹ ANNE

ART

Wednesdays and Fridays 1-3pm Online and in person Ecas, Norton Park

CRAFT

t has been a busy year in the Thursday and Friday Craft Groups with our craft goers creating some inspiring crafty works of art!

The Thursday group has focused on a wealth of activities including printed bags and felt making but more recently they have used their sewing skills to create their own advent calendar!

The Friday group have gone wild for papermaking, printing, zen doodling vases, weaving, paper flower making, book arts and felt jewellery making.

Gill Cockburn and Erin Rhode Craft Group Leaders ⁶⁶ Best day of the week with lovely friends and lovely activities. There's always something to learn.⁹⁹ ANGELA

⁶⁶ I enjoy collage and jewellery making and being with my friends.⁹⁵ LESLEY

⁶⁶ I like it because of the people I meet.⁹⁹ GOSHA

CRAFT

Thursdays and Fridays 10.30am-12.30pm Online and in person Ecas, Norton Park

READING AND CREATIVE WRITING

t's been another fine year of fizzing discussion about all things bookrelated, including a visit from awardwinning Edinburgh author Angela Jackson – she read from her latest novel The Darlings, sparking much creative thought about childhood experiences and unconditional love.

Also under the literary microscope were Michael Rosen, Emily Dickinson, A.C. Grayling, Louise Kennedy, and Philomena Cunk, among many others. Members' writing – in all its surreal, idiosyncratic glory – continues to inspire, not least for its engagement with the world and the various shades of (in)humanity therein.

John Mackay

Reading and Creative Writing Group Leader

Good writing exercises,
good laughs, and good company.
DAVID

⁶⁶ I like writing my stories, it helps me read as well. I get to practice my reading. On Fridays I like to draw my stories, it makes them come to life.⁹⁹ LEEANN

READING AND CREATIVE WRITING Thursdays 1-3pm Ecas, Norton Park



MUSIC For fun

The Music for Fun group continues to be lively, creative and engaged. Recently, the musical travels have roamed from Sunshine on Leith to The Dock of the Bay, from Runrig to Haircut 100 and with detours for Y Viva Espana, Roger Whittaker and Scooby Doo!

All members contribute valuable ideas and song lyrics, resulting in new works such as The Elbow Song, Rocket Chair and The Wind Behind Your Ears!

MUSIC FOR FUN

Fridays 2-3.30pm The Out of the Blue Drill Hall, Dalmeny Street The group is so prolific, it is a fun challenge to try and recall all ⁶⁶ Brilliant!⁹⁹
^{KEVIN}
⁶⁶ Really good!⁹⁹
CHRIS

the potential "works in progress" generated almost every week. Some have instruments they particularly enjoy playing, so can find a familiar way to engage with new material and be less shy about their singing and vocalising.

Members are very supportive and encouraging of each other, showing a mutual respect that is very positive and inspiring.

Akin Fatunmbi Music for Fun Group Leader

SWIMMING

joined Ecas in March 2024 as the Group Leader for Swimming, just as the group was getting restarted following a pause for a few years during Covid.

My hope is that group members can have access to the water within a supportive environment, where they feel comfortable to pursue their own goals.

Our group is a great mix of those who have attended swimming for years and people new to swimming. Members have varied priorities within the group. Some attend for relaxation within the warm water, others have more of an exercise focus and the water can allow access to body positions difficult for some to achieve on land.

Aoife McGrath Swimming Group Leader

> ⁶⁶ Since returning to swimming, I have felt that my physical and mental health has improved with the added bonus of a nice warm pool and a relaxing atmosphere also with an understanding Instructor that is receptive to my physical needs in the pool.⁹⁹ IAN

SWIMMING

Wednesdays – 6.45-8.30pm Oaklands School Hydrotherapy Pool

SEATED TAI CHI

The 'A' Team continues to develop and deepen their Tai Chi practice, really feeling the benefits of:

- Improved mood
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- More clarity and focus
- Increased physical energy

The tea break is an opportunity to connect and chat with old friends and new with tea, coffee and biscuits.

Ann Richards

Seated Tai Chi Group Leader

⁶⁶ Happy engaging in the Tai Chi movements. Love moving my arms and hands.⁹⁹ BICCO

⁶⁶ The Tai Chi movements and awareness of breathing helps to lift my mood, keeps me calm and improves coordination. I am enjoying meeting new people and learning movements I can practice at home.⁹⁹ RACHEL

SEATED TAI CHI Tuesdays 1.15-3.15pm Online and in person

Ecas, Norton Park

CHAIR YOGA

The yoga practice we follow is both sincere and beneficial for our service users and focusses on the physical body from the tips of the toes to the crown of the head.

By concentrating on breathing, we can help to open up more space in the chest and thus lift and lengthen the spine; or, we use sequences of gentle movement such as the Dragon's Breath. While even something as simple seeming as smiling can, if done correctly (coming from 'behind the face') always help by improving mood and making us feel better.

Sheila Donnelly and Kerry Cooper Chair Yoga Group leaders In September 2023, I joined Ecas' chair yoga. Prior to this I was virtually housebound as I suffer from COPD and use oxygen 24 hours a day. The class has made such a difference to my life. I can honestly say that both my mental and physical health has greatly improved over the last 12 months. The group leaders and the class members are all very friendly.

I now feel much more positive about venturing out on my own with my oxygen, and my COPD consultant has informed me that my lung function has increased 100%. She attributes this to the yoga class. Thank you, Ecas.⁹⁹ MARGARET

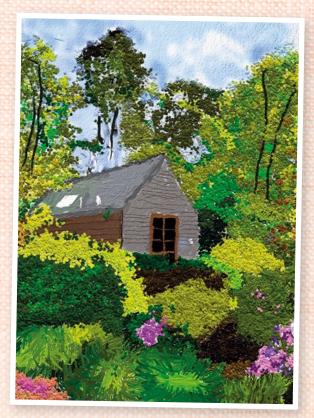
CHAIR YOGA

Tuesdays 1.15-3pm Pentland Community Centre, Oxgangs Brae 😽 elciais

IMPACT REFLECTED IN CREATIVITY

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR AMAZING ART AND CRAFT GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR INSPIRATION INCLUDING BARBARA, CHRISTINE, CONNIE, ELAINE, KIRSTEN AND SIMON.

















MURDER MOST FOUL

Lydia pouted prettily as she put on bright pink lipstick. Running her tongue over her lips she smiled a fake TV smile at her reflection.

"Now everyone, Lydia Andrews signing off", she gushed, pretending her hairbrush was a microphone.

The lights in the studio were being shut off by Ben, prop boy and man of all trades. He noticed one of the dressing rooms still ablaze with light. Everyone should have gone home by now. Curious, he headed over; it was Lydia's room...

BEFRIENDING

"Wonderful team, friendly and kind – most appreciated." JOANNE

Ecas operates a befriending service for socially isolated, physically disabled adults who live in Edinburgh, providing some extra company, friendship and companionship.

All our befrienders are volunteers and we match people based on shared interests and personalities. We always ensure there is some common ground as a starting point, to help the friendship flourish!

For more details, visit ecas.scot/befriending

WHEN SANDRO MET SHARON

Enjoy a tale of wildlife watching, trivia games and front row seats to see the Lady Boys of Bangkok. Sandro and Sharon have been meeting up regularly since May 2023 and are both thoroughly enjoying each other's company!





MEET PAUL, AN ECAS BEFRIENDER

Paul has been a befriender with Ecas since 2014 and is still loving the experience. He first got in touch when he was looking to enjoy interacting with someone new and have the satisfaction of being a befriender.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING FOR BEFRIENDERS

At Ecas, we owe a huge thank you to all our volunteers. This is especially the case with our Befriending Service, which runs on the generosity and dedication of our volunteer befrienders. Recently, we sat down with our Befriending Manager, Sam Collins, to find out about Volunteer Training and what Ecas does to bring newcomers up to speed!

GYDA AND ECAS

During the Volunteer Befriender Day in August 2023, we sat down with Gyda. She's been volunteering with Ecas since 2020 and was happy to share her story. 'I wanted to spend my spare time a little better and get to know someone I wouldn't know otherwise.

What I enjoy most about Befriending is my Befriendee! I think the team made a really good match. We get along so well. We're so similar although we're from different places and different backgrounds.



Twice a year we take the chance to celebrate the work of our wonderful volunteer befrienders by treating them to a day out and a chance to share knowledge with others. A big thanks go to Tribe Porty, Beach Wheelchairs, The Espy and The King's Wark for their help this year.

Sam Collins interview https://www. ecas.scot/volunteer-training/



And they told me how much they get out of it which makes me feel really good. It just overall brightens the whole experience and makes me want to continue...'

Enjoy the full Gyda and Ecas interviews on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/ @ecasscot1990

Live in Edinburgh and interested in being an Ecas Befriender? Get in touch with Ecas today to find out more! Speak with Sam on 07825 305 376 or email sam@ecas.scot Visit ecas.scot/befriending for more information. Ecas grants are for physically disabled adults and children, living in Edinburgh and Lothian. Grants are available to meet the costs of items or services which you can't access through welfare benefits and other sources.

EXAMPLES OF GRANTS

Ecas disability grants have been awarded for many things including:

- Iarger household items such as washing machines, fridge freezers, cookers, furniture and carpets
- IT equipment such as laptops and iPads
- power-packs retrofitted to manual wheelchairs
- student fees, sheds and holidays!

To find out more, visit ecas.scot/grants



⁶⁶ Reading your email this morning really brought me joy. It's much appreciated as I know how frustrated A has been being isolated indoors for all these months, she will definitely enjoy getting out and about in her wheelchair when the power pack has been fitted.⁹⁹ To everyone at Ecas

Thank you so much for Amy new swing + frame. Amy enpys her swing often and her old one has now seen better days. It has been used almost daidy during the panciemic. We are so graviful for your kindness. Horpally this week it will be por op and in use. Phoros to pollow! Thank you so much again.

🏷 elciais

ELAINE AND ECAS

n 1995, Elaine Boyd was in her early 20's and looking for a social life. It was on a night out ten pin bowling that she first met the folk from Ecas. In those days, Ecas had a Social Club and Elaine soon became an active member,

⁶⁶ First it was Monday nights, then we soon added Thursday nights, also trips away, including a trip to Benidorm!⁹⁹



Reminiscing brings a big smile to Elaine's face, as she talks about the good times and long-standing friendships she forged.

Alongside the socialising in those early days, Elaine joined the Ecas Art Group and has been a member ever since.

In our full interview with Elaine, she shares more of her Ecas story, from her art taking centre stage (here she is pictured above with her sculpture, David the Chimp), to the ways she has benefited as an Ecas grant recipient, and her time as a valued member of the Ecas Board.



Elaine has seen Ecas evolve and develop but is keen to stress that the strength of Ecas is its consistency and quality of support,

⁶⁶ Ecas is always there for me. It's a rock.⁹⁹

For Ecas, our relationship with Elaine helps us demonstrate the essential value of what we do,

⁶⁶ I share because I want to inspire other people.⁹⁹

Talking of inspiration, in August this year, Elaine completed the Scottish Half Marathon, here she is!

SCHITCHERE SCHITCHERE

⁶⁶ Mission accomplished. My dream has come true.⁹⁹

Read the full story of Elaine and Ecas https://www.ecas.scot/elaine

FINANCE REPORT

In the financial year, the total value of the portfolio has increased by $\pounds75,278$ to $\pounds4,564,598$. Headline investment income has increased from $\pounds164,892$ in 2023 to $\pounds174,475$ in the current year, which is great considering the ups and downs of the markets over the last year.

Donations and legacies decreased from £18,492 to £7,819 in the current year. £6,319 was raised via bucket collections from our Charity Partnership with The Edinburgh Playhouse. Those collections directly supported Ecas' Grants Fund. Ecas could not achieve what it does without the support of the trusts, companies and individuals that make donations, provide gifts or services in kind and help us in so many ways. Ecas is most grateful for your support and hope it can continue.

I would like to thank our investment managers, David Boswell and Allan Cameron, and auditors AAB led by Tony Sinclair for their help and governance. I would also like to thank all members of the F&PC and Board.

Scott Alexander, Chair

Finance & Personnel Committee Scott Alexander – Chair Catherine Dowell, John Dunn, Andrew Herberts,

Caroline Loudon, Alice McIntosh.

ACCOUNTS

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial information set out in this Summarised Financial Statement is only a summary of information derived from the charity's annual accounts. It does not contain additional information derived from the trustees' annual report. It does not contain sufficient information to allow as full an understanding of the results and state of affairs of the charity as would be provided by the full annual accounts and report.

Anyone requiring more detailed information can obtain a full copy of the charity's annual accounts and trustees' annual report by emailing **ally@ecas.scot**

Independent Auditors' Statement to the members of Ecas Limited

We have examined the summary financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and the auditor

The trustees (who also act as directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the summary financial statement in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summary financial statement with the full annual financial statements, and its compliance with the relevant requirements of section 427 of the Companies Act 2006 and the regulations made thereunder.

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 2008/3 issued by the Auditing Practices Board. Our report on the company's full annual financial statements describes the basis of our opinion on those financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the summary financial statement is consistent with the full annual accounts of Ecas Limited for the year ended 31 March 2024.

French Duncan LLP trading as AAB Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors 81 George Street Edinburgh EH2 3ES

Statement of Trustees

The auditor has issued unqualified reports on the full annual accounts and on the consistency of the trustees' annual report with those annual accounts. Their report on the full annual accounts contained no statement under sections 498(2) or 498(3) of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 4 June 2024 and signed on their behalf, by: Andrew Herberts

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
INCOME FROM:				
Donations and legacies		7,819	7,819	18,492
Charitable activities		4,213	4,213	4,125
Other trading activities		84	84	149
Investments		174,475	174,475	164,892
TOTAL INCOME		186,591	186,591	187,658
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Raising funds		25,364	25,364	26,816
Charitable activities		317,577	317,577	291,367
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		342,941	342,941	318,183
NET EXPENDITURE BEFORE NET GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS	-	(156,350)	(156,350)	(130,525)
Net gains/(losses) on investments	-	221,931	221,931	(279,817)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	-	65,581	65,581	(410,342)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	_	4,536,923	4,536,923	4,947,265
Net movement in funds	_	65,581	65,581	(410,342)
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	-	4,602,504	4,602,504	4,536,923

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	929	1,916
Investments	4,564,598	4,489,320
TOTAL	4,565,527	4,491,236
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	12,838	10,404
Cash at bank and in hand	51,059	59,556
TOTAL	63,897	69,960
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(26,920)	(24,273)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	36,977	45,687
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,602,504	4,536,923
CHARITY FUNDS		
Unrestricted funds	4,602,504	4,536,923
TOTAL FUNDS	4,602,504	4,536,923



elclals

FUNDRAISE FOR ECAS

Whatever you do for us, and whatever you raise, whether it's £5 or £50, we are thankful for every penny. Do get in touch if you'd like to discuss your fundraising ideas.

We are most grateful to: Ambassador Theatre Group – Edinburgh Playhouse, Christine Black, Marion Blake, Norman Cockburn, Christine Collins, David Edward, John Hunter, Iain McMillian, Barbara Stewart, Colin Stewart and Graham Young. Thanks are also extended to many Ecas service users for their generosity in making general donations.

PLAYHOUSE PARTNERSHIP

Ecas was delighted to be selected as one of Edinburgh Playhouse's Charities of the Year 2022-23. Having the opportunity to work in partnership with such an iconic, local, live entertainment venue helped Ecas raise awareness and continue our work improving the lives of physically disabled people across Edinburgh and Lothian.



OVER £11,000 WAS RAISED IN BUCKET COLLECTIONS DURING THE PARTNERSHIP!

ENGAGE WITH ECAS

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!

X@EcasScot ()/EcasScot ()@EcasScot > Search for Ecas Scot

SIGN UP to our newsletter via ecas.scot

ECAS CRITERIA

ECAS CRITERIA FOR SERVICE USERS

Ecas follows the EHRC guideline that: "You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- Indext in the image of the i

However, please remember that Ecas only provides support to people who have a physical disability. For more details, visit **ecas.scot/about**

STAFF

THE ECAS TEAM

Honorary President The Countess of Rosebery

Vice-Presidents

W Graham Monteith, Gavin Strang

Board of Directors

Andrew Herberts (Chair), Ian Jubb (Vice Chair), Scott Alexander, Dale Davies, John Dunn, Joanne King, Jennifer Learmonth, Robin McKendrick, Victoria Miller, Ashleigh De Verteuil.

PERMANENT STAFF

Ally Irvine, Chief Executive and Company Secretary Liz Jarvis, Administrator Sam Collins, Befriending Manager Gary Smith, Befriending Assistant Charlie Halliday. Social Media and Website Co-ordinator Gill Cockburn. Erin Rhode. Art Group and Craft Group Leaders Kerry Cooper and Sheila Donnelly, Chair Yoga Group Leaders Akin Fatunmbi, Music for Fun Group Leader John Mackay, Reading and Creative Writing Group Leader Ann Richards. Seated Tai Chi Group Leader Aoife McGrath, Swimming Group Leader Sophie Livingstone, Lifeguard

ACTIVITIES TIMETABLE

TRY OUR ACTIVITIES FOR FREE FOR 2 WEEKS AND THEN IT'S ONLY £2.30 PER SESSION!

Seated Tai Chi	1.15-3.15pm	Norton Park	Online and in person
Chair Yoga	1.15-3pm	Pentland Community Centre	
WEDNESDAY	s		
Art	1-3pm	Norton Park	Online and in person
Swimming	6.45-8.30pm	Oaklands School	Hydrotherapy Pool
тиндерлуе			
THURSDAYS	40.00 40.00		
Craft Deading and	•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••	Norton Park	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Reading and Creative Writing	1-3pm	Norton Park	Online and in person
RIDAYS			
Craft	10.30am-12.30pm	Norton Park	Online and in person
Art	1-3pm	Norton Park	Online and in person
Music for fun	2-3.30pm	Out of the Blue Drill Hall	
MONDAY TO			
Computing suite		Norton Park	Please contact us in advance
somparing outo			

ENGAGE WITH ECAS

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!

SIGN UP to our newsletter via ecas.scot

Registered Office: Ecas, Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY Telephone: 07500 221 618 Email: hello@ecas.scot Website: ecas.scot

A Company Limited by Guarantee Reg. No. SC102790 Scottish Charity Number: SC 014929