

Connect in the North

Charity number 1078829

A company limited by guarantee number 03127540

Annual Report and Financial Statements **for the year ended 31 March 2024**



Connect in the North

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

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Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Connect in the North

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position
Vicky Hiles	Chairperson
Maisie Hirschhorn	
Michael Buttery	
Kenny Hendy	
Robert Stephens	Treasurer

Charity number	1078829	Registered in England and Wales
Company number	03127540	Registered in England and Wales

Registered and principal address	Bankers
Office 45	Co-operative Bank plc
Sugar Mill Business Park	19/20 Commercial Street
Oakhurst Road	Leeds
Leeds	LS1 6AL
LS11 7HL	

Connect in the North

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

Independent examiner

Katy Sargeant ACA

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was formed on 17 November 1995. It is governed by its articles of association last amended by special resolution on 25 June 2019. The liability of the members in the event of the company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £1.

Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are also the directors for the purposes of company law and are appointed by the members at the AGM.

Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects

The relief of people with learning difficulties within the Leeds Metropolitan area and the North of England.

The charity's main activities

We are a Centre for Inclusive Living led by people with learning difficulties. We work to make things better for people with learning difficulties. We help people with learning difficulties change their own lives through person centred planning. We run training in person centred thinking. We provide an information and signposting services for people with learning difficulties in Leeds.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular ensuring that people with learning difficulties have control of their own lives and equal power in the world.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our Trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

Achievements and performance

Connect in the North has 396 members and ran 4 members events in person and on Zoom. They were a way for members to meet up and to find out what was happening in Leeds. We held a planning meeting in April and we asked members what work we should be doing from this we wrote a plan for the future.

Leeds Learning Disability Awareness Week in June was back in person. Connect in the North had a stall at the Learning Disability Picnic at Temple Newsam. Connect in the North organised the first Learning Disability Pride march in the centre of Leeds, there was a great turn out even in the pouring rain.

Connect in the North hosts the Being Social Task Group, this is a group of people with learning difficulties, family carers and staff from different organisations. They come together to plan how we improve the social lives of people with learning difficulties. Connect in the North ran for the second year an running an information event in Kirkgate Market in Leeds Learning Disability Week. There were 16 stalls run by different organisations in Leeds.

This year Through the Maze met a total of 1039 online, face to face and at events by running stalls. 825 people were subscribed to the quarterly newsletter.

The Through the Maze website had 29,964 visits over the year. We launched Through the Maze WhatsApp group 80 people signed up to receive weekly messages about what is happening in Leeds.

Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance continued

The Pass it on People are all paid members of staff with learning disabilities visited many places in Leeds and wrote detailed articles about them in the quarterly newsletter. During the year we have been promoting the Being Employed Leeds website as much as possible.

We attended the Employment Task Group meetings. We delivered 2 presentations to the Developing You groups at The Thackray Museum and also attended SEND Next Choices (getting ready for adult life) events at Pudsey Civic Hall and The First Direct Arena.

We completed the bereavement training and submitted the final report.

In November we worked with Forum Central and ran an event about Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds. This event was a way to show how they can have more control over their support.

We also trained 122 people with learning difficulties. Training for people with learning difficulties included My Life My Way (which we did twice), Good Relationships, Scam Free and Webwise

The Rooots team ran Equality training for Age Uk and Pyramid of Arts.

We ran some of our Person Centred thinking workshops for staff and family carers online this year. We also ran training in person. This year we trained 162 people.

- Page Profiles and Person Centred Reviews
- Person Centred Active Support
- Person Centred Approach to Difficult Behaviour
- Person Centred Awareness Training

Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance continued

- Person Centred Risk Assessment and Management
- Problem Solving Tools
- Supported decision making
- Support Planning for Providers
- Writing Good Outcomes
- Managers Making it Happen over 6 months

As well as our open courses we ran training for – NHS and Leeds Jewish Welfare Board.

The Pass it on People successfully bid for money to cover the cost of the hire of the screen in the Market in June 2024. This is so we can run slide show of everyone's achievements over the year at the Being Social Information Day. We are being funded by Royal Mencap's Positive Futures team.

Financial review

The net expenditure for the year was £16,417, including net expenditure of £12,897 on unrestricted funds and net expenditure of £3,520 on restricted funds.

Reserves policy

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year end were £116,256.

In the light of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) recommendations to ensure adequate cash flow, the board aims to build up unrestricted funds equivalent to six to twelve months total running costs.

At 31st March 2024 the reserves equated to just over 8 months of budgeted total running costs for 2024-25.

Connect in the North

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and UK Accounting Standards.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

Connect in the North

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (Charities SORP (FRS102)), and in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by the board of trustees on 5/9/2024

Robert Stephens (Trustee)

Connect in the North

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Connect in the North

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 12 to to 25.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act;
or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records; or

Connect in the North

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Connect in the North

- 3 the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4 the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Katy Sargeant ACA

10/9/2024

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Connect in the North
Statement of Financial Activities
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Income from:					
Grants and donations	(2)	144,945	540	145,485	68,944
Contracts		-	-	-	76,116
Services provided		790	-	790	1,570
Bank interest		1,505	-	1,505	166
Total income		<u>147,240</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>147,780</u>	<u>146,796</u>
Expenditure on:					
Salaries, NI and pensions	(3)	113,259	3,180	116,439	103,544
Other staff costs		485	-	485	1,042
Events and activities		310	-	310	130
Premises costs		17,487	696	18,183	17,394
Printing, stationery, post and phone		15,033	175	15,208	11,311
Other running costs		1,348	9	1,357	102
Insurance		2,475	-	2,475	2,763
IT costs		6,044	-	6,044	2,388
Independent examination		1,056	-	1,056	792

Connect in the North
Statement of Financial Activities
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024	2024	2024	2023
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds	funds	funds
		£	£	£	£
Expenditure on:					
Office equipment		908	-	908	97
Marketing		138	-	138	-
Depreciation		753	-	753	1,411
Bank charges		120	-	120	120
Subscriptions		721	-	721	702
Total expenditure		<u>160,137</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>164,197</u>	<u>141,796</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		<u>(12,897)</u>	<u>(3,520)</u>	<u>(16,417)</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Fund balances brought forward		<u>129,715</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>133,775</u>	<u>128,775</u>
Fund balances carried forward	(4)	<u>116,818</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

Connect in the North **Balance sheet** **as at 31 March 2024**

		2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	(5)	562	-	562	1,315
Total fixed assets		<u>562</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>562</u>	<u>1,315</u>
Current assets					
Debtors and prepayments	(6)	267	-	267	1,922
Cash at bank and in hand	(7)	119,372	540	119,912	133,278
Total current assets		<u>119,639</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>120,179</u>	<u>135,200</u>
Current liabilities:					
amounts falling due within one year					
Creditors and accruals	(8)	3,383	-	3,383	2,740
Total current liabilities		<u>3,383</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,383</u>	<u>2,740</u>
Net current assets / (liabilities)		<u>116,256</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>116,796</u>	<u>132,460</u>
Net assets		<u>116,818</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>
Funds					
Unrestricted funds		116,818	-	116,818	129,715
Restricted funds		-	540	540	4,060
Total funds		<u>116,818</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>

Connect in the North Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and with FRS 102 (effective January 2019).

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 5/9/2024

Robert Stephens (Trustee)

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

Going concern

The trustees are satisfied that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the resources, if it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies continued

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Where grants are related to performance and specific deliverables, they are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

Donated goods for resale are valued at the amount actually realised upon their sale.

Donated assets, facilities or services are valued at their estimated value to the charity. This is the price that the charity estimates it would pay in the open market for equivalent items; or services and facilities of equivalent utility to the charity.

Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Taxation

As a charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies continued

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £200 are capitalised and included at cost including any incidental expenses of acquisition. Gifted assets are shown at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment: over 4 years

Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are recognised in the year they are payable.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Leases

Rents under operating leases are charged on a straight line basis over the lease term or to an earlier date if the lease can be determined without financial penalty.

Connect in the North
Notes to the accounts continued
for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Grants and donations

	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	funds	funds	funds	funds
	£	£	£	£
Leeds City Council (LCC) Joint Commissioning	144,945	-	144,945	68,829
Better Action for Families (BAFF)	-	540	540	-
Other donations	-	-	-	115
	<u>144,945</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>145,485</u>	<u>68,944</u>

3 Staff costs and numbers

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross salaries	107,153	95,153
Social security costs	9,327	8,927
Employment allowance	(5,000)	(5,000)
Pensions	4,959	4,464
	<u>116,439</u>	<u>103,544</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 9.9, being an average of 3.4 full time equivalent (2023: 9.8, 3.2 FTE). There were no employees with emoluments above £60,000.

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2024

3 Staff costs and numbers continued

Defined contribution pension scheme	2024	2023
	£	£
Costs of the scheme to the charity for the year	4,959	4,464

4 Restricted funds	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
BAFF Good Lives	-	540	-	-	540
LCF - Jimbo's Fund	3,314	-	3,314	-	-
Employability Hub	746	-	746	-	-
	<u>4,060</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>540</u>

Fund name	Purpose of restriction
BAFF Good Lives	Towards carers expenses for the Good Lives Leaders visits and meetings.
LCF - Jimbo's Fund	To provide bereavement training to people with learning difficulties and family carers.
Employability Hub	To develop a website to aid people with learning difficulties in Leeds to find employment.

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2024

5 Tangible assets

Cost

At 1 April 2023

Additions

At 31 March 2024

Fixtures, fittings and
equipment

Total

£

£

8,795

8,795

-

-

8,795

8,795

Depreciation

At 1 April 2023

Charge for year

At 31 March 2024

7,480

7,480

753

753

8,233

8,233

Net book value

At 31 March 2024

562

562

At 31 March 2023

1,315

1,315

Connect in the North **Notes to the accounts continued** **for the year ended 31 March 2024**

6 Debtors and prepayments

Prepayments
Other debtors

2024	2023
£	£
209	1,922
58	-
<hr/>	<hr/>
267	1,922
<hr/>	<hr/>

7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank
Cash in hand

2024	2023
£	£
119,732	133,098
180	180
<hr/>	<hr/>
119,912	133,278
<hr/>	<hr/>

8 Creditors and accruals

Accruals
Taxation and social security
Other creditors

2024	2023
£	£
1,056	792
2,174	1,948
153	-
<hr/>	<hr/>
3,383	2,740
<hr/>	<hr/>

Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2024

9 Related party transactions continued

Trustee expenses

During the year 1 trustee was paid a total of £54 in respect of travel (previous year: nil).

Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.

Details of remuneration and benefits

Remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel

The total employee benefits received by key management personnel were £74,871 (previous year: £78,476).

10 Operating leases

Expected future minimum lease payments over the remaining life of the lease, analysed into the period in which the commitment falls due:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	13,329	12,064
In the second to fifth years inclusive	4,687	997
Over five years from the balance sheet date	-	-
	<u>18,016</u>	<u>13,061</u>

Connect in the North
Statement of Financial Activities including comparatives for all funds
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Income						
Grants and donations	144,945	68,944	540	-	145,485	68,944
Contracts	-	76,116	-	-	-	76,116
Services provided	790	1,570	-	-	790	1,570
Bank interest	1,505	166	-	-	1,505	166
Total income	147,240	146,796	540	-	147,780	146,796
Expenditure						
Salaries, NI and pensions	113,259	102,500	3,180	1,044	116,439	103,544
Other staff costs	485	1,042	-	-	485	1,042
Events and activities	310	130	-	-	310	130
Premises costs	17,487	16,498	696	896	18,183	17,394
Printing, stationery, post and phone	15,033	11,192	175	119	15,208	11,311
Other running costs	1,348	102	9	-	1,357	102
Insurance	2,475	2,629	-	134	2,475	2,763
IT costs	6,044	2,388	-	-	6,044	2,388
Independent examination	1,056	792	-	-	1,056	792
Office equipment	908	97	-	-	908	97

Connect in the North
Statement of Financial Activities including comparatives for all funds
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Expenditure						
Marketing	138	-	-	-	138	-
Depreciation	753	1,411	-	-	753	1,411
Bank charges	120	120	-	-	120	120
Subscriptions	721	(327)	-	1,029	721	702
Total expenditure	<u>160,137</u>	<u>138,574</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>3,222</u>	<u>164,197</u>	<u>141,796</u>
Net income / (expenditure)	<u>(12,897)</u>	<u>8,222</u>	<u>(3,520)</u>	<u>(3,222)</u>	<u>(16,417)</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Fund balances brought forward	<u>129,715</u>	<u>121,493</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>7,282</u>	<u>133,775</u>	<u>128,775</u>
Fund balances carried forward	<u>116,818</u>	<u>129,715</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>