

# **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 2025**



# **Connect in the North**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Trustees' report	2 to 11
Examiner's report	12
Statement of financial activities	14
Balance sheet	16
Notes to the accounts	18 to 26

**Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO**

# Connect in the North

## Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 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	Dates
Vicky Hiles	Chairperson	
Maisie Hirschhorn		resigned 17 May 2025
Michael Buttery		
Kenny Hendy		resigned 17 May 2025
Robert Stephens	Treasurer	
Kenneth Fletcher		appointed 16 May 2025
<b>Charity number</b>	1078829	Registered in England and Wales
<b>Company number</b>	03127540	Registered in England and Wales
<b>Registered and principal address</b>	<b>Bankers</b>	
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 2025**

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

### **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 2025**

## **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.

### **Achievements and performance**

All our members and board of directors of Connect in the North are people with a learning disability.

The board of directors listen to its members and want to find out what would make our members live their best life. We work to make this happen.

## **Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

### **Achievements and performance continued**

Connect in the North has 405 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 had a big AGM this year, over 60 people came.

In preparation for Learning Disability week we worked with Asking You to write questions for the Council Chamber Take Over. The Pass it on People got funding from Positive Changes to hire the screen in the market. We used it to share information at the Being Social Event we hosted. We held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leeds Learning Disability Pride March in the City Centre. Over 100 people marched.

Connect in the North had a stall at the Learning Disability Picnic at Temple Newsam. 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 can improve the social lives of people with learning difficulties. It is part of Being Me. This is the Leeds Learning Disability Strategy. A plan to make life better for people with learning disabilities in Leeds.

Each year we organise the Being Social Information event in Kirkgate Market. It's for people with learning disabilities to find things to do in Leeds. This year we had 24 organisations sharing information about thing to do. We spoke to 311 people. Dramarama performed a Flash Mob.

The Rooots team invited the Race Equality Foundation to run an event about Annual Health Checks. The team got money from the Wharfedale Foundation Trust to work with film make Jan Wells. They are interviewing people with learning disabilities about what their religion means to them.

We ran training sessions for 169 people with learning disabilities.

## **Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

### **Achievements and performance continued**

We ran – 3 My Life My Way Courses. They were about being part of your local community, voting and how to be a trainer.

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.

- People in Action
- Asking You
- People Matters

### **Training for staff and family carers**

We ran training sessions for **252** members of staff and family carers.

We ran Managers Making it Happen over 6 months. We did this twice. This was for managers supporting people in Leeds.

We ran 4 programs of person-centred thinking training which included:

- 1 Page Profile and Person-Centred Review Training
- Person Centred Active Support
- Person Centred Approaches to Difficult Behaviour
- Person Centred Awareness Training
- Supporting Decision Making
- Writing Good Outcomes

## **Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

### **Achievements and performance continued**

- Supporting People to Find Love
- Let's Talk About Loss

Through the Maze is an information and signposting service for people with learning disabilities, families and staff. This year we met with 2,443 people and had stalls at:

- Autism Acceptance Stall
- SEND - Creative Careers
- SEND – Next Choices Employment Event
- Being Social
- Picnic in the Park
- International Day of Disabled People
- Leeds Local Live Event

These are some of the things we did:

- People's Parliament
- Met Lynn Bailey from BAFF to find out about Small Sparks funding.
- Forum Central social media takeover.
- Wrote an article for Leeds Living website
- Council Chambers Takeover
- Learning Disability Pride March
- Being Social marketplace
- St Vincent's Community Centre



## **Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

### **Achievements and performance continued**

- We met with a team that is making Leeds train station better.
- Holbeck Together

These are some of the things we did continued:

- Courtney interviewed a member of Leep1
- BAFF AGM.
- Elland Road Police HQ event.
- Woodhouse Community Centre
- Scope Community Hub

We send out 984 newsletter every 3 months. The Through the Maze website had 41,000 visits last year. We got 126 people signed up to WhatsApp. We have 710 Facebook likes.

We took part in 2 Webinars for Skills for Care.

We ran staff training for Forum Central.

Continued to host and update the Being Employed Leeds Website.

### **Financial review**

The net expenditure for the year was £13,359, including net expenditure of £16,727 on unrestricted funds and net income of £3,368 on restricted funds.

## **Connect in the North Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

### **Reserves policy**

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year end were £100,003.

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 2025 the reserves equated to just over 8 months of budgeted total running costs for 2025-26.

## **Connect in the North**

### **Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2025**

#### **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 2025**

#### **Statement of trustees' responsibilities continued**

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 28/8/2025

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 2025, which are set out on pages 14 to 26.

#### **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**

#### **Independent examiner's statement continued**

- 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

29/8/2025

#### **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 2025

	Notes	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Grants and donations	(2)	145,245	3,801	149,046	145,485
Services Provided		1,800	-	1,800	790
Bank interest		1,807	-	1,807	1,505
<b>Total income</b>		<u>148,852</u>	<u>3,801</u>	<u>152,653</u>	<u>147,780</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Salaries, NI and pensions	(3)	125,116	37	125,153	116,439
Other staff costs		558	-	558	485
Events and activities		465	396	861	310
Premises costs		18,713	-	18,713	18,183
Printing, stationery, post and phone		12,982	-	12,982	15,208
Other running costs		1,128	-	1,128	1,357
Insurance		2,098	-	2,098	2,475
IT costs		1,633	-	1,633	6,044
Independent examination		1,080	-	1,080	1,056
Office equipment		95	-	95	908
Marketing		367	-	367	138

## Connect in the North

### Statement of Financial Activities

(including summary income and expenditure account)  
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes			
	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Depreciation	474	-	474	753
Bank charges	120	-	120	120
Subscriptions	750	-	750	721
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>165,579</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>166,012</u>	<u>164,197</u>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<u>(16,727)</u>	<u>3,368</u>	<u>(13,359)</u>	<u>(16,417)</u>
<b>Fund balances brought forward</b>	<u>116,818</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>
<b>Fund balances carried forward</b>	(4) <u>100,091</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>103,999</u>	<u>117,358</u>

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.



## Connect in the North

### Balance sheet

as at 31 March 2025

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible assets	(5) 88	-	88	562
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<u>88</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>562</u>
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors and prepayments	(6) 1,376	-	1,376	267
Cash at bank and in hand	(7) 101,839	3,908	105,747	119,912
<b>Total current assets</b>	<u>103,215</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>107,123</u>	<u>120,179</u>
<b>Current liabilities: amounts falling due within one year</b>				
Creditors and accruals	(8) 3,212	-	3,212	3,383
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<u>3,212</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,212</u>	<u>3,383</u>
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>	<u>100,003</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>103,911</u>	<u>116,796</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>100,091</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>103,999</u>	<u>117,358</u>
<b>Funds</b>				
Unrestricted funds	100,091	-	100,091	116,818
Restricted funds	-	3,908	3,908	540
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>100,091</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>103,999</u>	<u>117,358</u>

## **Connect in the North**

### **Balance sheet**

as at 31 March 2025

For the year ending 31 March 2025 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 28/8/2025

Robert Stephens    (Trustee)

# **Connect in the North**

## **Notes to the accounts**

for the year ended 31 March 2025

### **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 2025

### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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

# **Connect in the North**

## **Notes to the accounts**

for the year ended 31 March 2025

### **1 Accounting policies continued**

#### **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 2025

#### 2 Grants and donations

	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Leeds City Council (LCC) Joint Commissioning	144,945	-	144,945	144,945
Better Action for Families (BAFF)	-	-	-	540
The Wharfedale Foundation	-	3,801	3,801	-
Other donations	300	-	300	-
	<u>145,245</u>	<u>3,801</u>	<u>149,046</u>	<u>145,485</u>

#### 3 Staff costs and numbers

	2025 £	2024 £
Gross salaries	113,997	107,153
Social security costs	10,249	9,327
Employment allowance	(5,000)	(5,000)
Pensions	<u>5,907</u>	<u>4,959</u>
	<u>125,153</u>	<u>116,439</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 10, being an average of 3.3 full time equivalent (2024: 9.9, 3.4 FTE). There were no employees with emoluments above £60,000.

#### Defined contribution pension scheme

	2025 £	2024 £
Costs of the scheme to the charity for the year	5,907	4,959

# Connect in the North

## Notes to the accounts continued

### for the year ended 31 March 2025

<b>4 Restricted funds</b>	Balance b/f £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	Balance c/f £
BAFF Good Lives Leaders	540	-	146	-	394
The Wharfedale Foundation	-	3,801	287	-	3,514
	<u>540</u>	<u>3,801</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,908</u>

#### **Fund name**

BAFF Good Lives Leaders

The Wharfedale Foundation

#### **Purpose of restriction**

Towards carers expenses for the Good Lives Leaders visits and meetings.

Towards the cost of making a film about faith.

## **5 Tangible assets**

#### **Cost**

At 1 April 2024

Additions

At 31 March 2025

#### **Depreciation**

At 1 April 2024

Charge for year

At 31 March 2025

#### **Net book value**

At 31 March 2025

At 31 March 2024

Fixtures, fittings and equipm't £	Total £
8,795	8,795
-	-
<u>8,795</u>	<u>8,795</u>
8,233	8,233
474	474
<u>8,707</u>	<u>8,707</u>
<u>88</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>562</u>	<u>562</u>

## Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts continued  
for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 6 Debtors and prepayments

Debtors  
Prepayments  
Other debtors

2025	2024
£	£
500	209
876	-
-	58
<u>1,376</u>	<u>267</u>

### 7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank  
Cash in hand

2025	2024
£	£
105,567	119,732
180	180
<u>105,747</u>	<u>119,912</u>

### 8 Creditors and accruals

Accruals  
Taxation and social security  
Other creditors

2025	2024
£	£
1,080	1,056
2,132	2,174
-	153
<u>3,212</u>	<u>3,383</u>



## Connect in the North

Notes to the accounts continued  
for the year ended 31 March 2025

### 9 Related party transactions

#### Trustee expenses

During the year 6 trustees were paid a total of £47 in respect of travel (previous year: 1 trustee and £54).

#### Trustee remuneration and benefits

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

#### Remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel

The total employee benefits received by key management personnel were £85,423 (previous year: £82,057).

### 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:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	1,569	13,329
In the second to fifth years inclusive	3,118	4,687
Over five years from the balance sheet date	-	-
	<u>4,687</u>	<u>18,016</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 2025

	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Income</b>						
Grants and donations	145,245	144,945	3,801	540	149,046	145,485
Services Provided	1,800	790	-	-	1,800	790
Bank interest	1,807	1,505	-	-	1,807	1,505
<b>Total income</b>	<b>148,852</b>	<b>147,240</b>	<b>3,801</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>152,653</b>	<b>147,780</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Salaries, NI and pensions	125,116	113,259	37	3,180	125,153	116,439
Other staff costs	558	485	-	-	558	485
Events and activities	465	310	396	-	861	310
Premises costs	18,713	17,487	-	696	18,713	18,183
Printing, stationery, post and pho	12,982	15,033	-	175	12,982	15,208
Other running costs	1,128	1,348	-	9	1,128	1,357
Insurance	2,098	2,475	-	-	2,098	2,475
IT costs	1,633	6,044	-	-	1,633	6,044
Independent examination	1,080	1,056	-	-	1,080	1,056
Office equipment	95	908	-	-	95	908
Marketing	367	138	-	-	367	138

## 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 2025

	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Depreciation	474	753	-	-	474	753
Bank charges	120	120	-	-	120	120
Subscriptions	750	721	-	-	750	721
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>165,579</u>	<u>160,137</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>166,012</u>	<u>164,197</u>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	(16,727)	(12,897)	3,368	(3,520)	(13,359)	(16,417)
<b>Fund balances brought forward</b>	<u>116,818</u>	<u>129,715</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>117,358</u>	<u>133,775</u>
<b>Fund balances carried forward</b>	<u>100,091</u>	<u>116,818</u>	<u>3,908</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>103,999</u>	<u>117,358</u>