



trustees annual report

contents page

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006 present their report with the financial statements for the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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Executive Summary



Including Welcome & Reflections from the Chair & Board of Trustees

2024 has been a year of resilience, reconnection and reinvention for Pennine Mencap.

At a time of ongoing financial uncertainty for many charities, our team has demonstrated outstanding creativity, commitment and care in navigating challenges while maintaining a high-quality, inclusive offer for adults with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries across Oldham, Tameside and Greater Manchester.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the staff, volunteers, service users and community partners who have helped ensure that the charity's mission has not only endured but grown stronger. The work undertaken this year has reaffirmed Pennine Mencap's place as a trusted provider, a bold innovator and a much-loved presence in the local community.



**"The staff are great,
they help me feel
comfortable"**

Michelle
Service User



Throughout 2024, Pennine Mencap has...

- Delivered an ambitious timetable of arts, wellbeing and social activities across Oldham and Tameside.
- Seen service user participation, especially in public performance, reach record levels.
- Forged new community partnerships and strengthened many existing ones — through powerful platforms like Forever Manchester, Caritas, Dr Kershaw's, and Oldham Community Leisure.
- Maintained a strong commitment to equity, accessibility and service-user voice across all areas of work.
- Repositioned its fundraising strategy toward more flexible, project-based funding, demonstrating resilience in the face of reduced long-term core income.

These achievements have taken place in a demanding operational context. The conclusion of major three-year grants from the National Lottery Community Fund and Tudor Trust placed increased pressure on our income streams, particularly in regard to staffing and running costs. However, in the face of this, the team's focus, energy and ability to adapt has been exemplary — responding with determination, resourcefulness and a renewed emphasis on showcasing the quality and impact of our work.

Perhaps the most striking theme throughout 2024 has been a commitment to co-creation, inclusion and outward connection. From the success of Showability and Stage Right Performing Arts, to the choir's growing reputation and the remarkable impact of Finding a Foothold, it is clear that Pennine Mencap is not simply delivering services — we are creating platforms for people with learning disabilities to be seen, heard and celebrated in public life.

Looking Ahead: Future Plans for 2025 and Beyond

As we head into 2025, our priorities are informed by the experiences and lessons of the past year. The coming year will focus on consolidating growth, strengthening sustainability and further embedding our mission in the communities we serve.

Key areas of focus will include:

1. Strengthening Core Stability

We will prioritise identifying and securing new sources of core funding to replace those lost in 2024, with a renewed focus on unrestricted or infrastructure-focused support. We will continue to work with Action Together and other local partners to identify strategic opportunities.

2. Expanding Partnerships and Collaborative Delivery

Building on new links made with Cycling UK, Failsworth Community Pop Choir, and SPARK Oldham — as well as long-term allies like Hurst Community Centre and Dr Kershaw's — we will expand co-produced, cross-organisational work, particularly in public performance, community health and inclusive education.

3. Scaling Successful Programmes

We aim to increase the reach of high-impact initiatives such as:

- **Showability** – expanding dance performance to more venues and events.
- **Cookalong** – refining delivery models to increase accessibility.
- **Finding a Foothold** – seeking new funding to evolve employability and confidence-building projects.
- **Dancercise & WOW Club** – sustaining and growing participation in these health-focused offerings.



“Being part of Pennine Mencap has boosted my self-esteem.”

Karl
Service User



4. Investing in Service User Voice and Representation

We will seek opportunities to platform our service users as performers, creators, educators and ambassadors — not only within the charity but in the wider community. This includes further performances, public exhibitions, and involvement in planning and delivery.

5. Infrastructure Development

We will explore options to improve our transport capacity (highlighted as a barrier to community engagement in 2024), invest in venue development and seek capital or in-kind support for premises improvements — including accessibility enhancements and energy efficiency.

6. Widening Access and Inclusion

We are committed to reaching underrepresented individuals and groups across the boroughs we serve. This includes increasing opportunities for adults with complex needs, and continuing to remove barriers to participation — be they physical, social, economic or attitudinal.

Final Note from the Chair

To every funder, partner, volunteer, staff member and service user: thank you. In a difficult year for the third sector, Pennine Mencap has not only held firm but flourished — thanks entirely to the commitment, creativity and compassion at the heart of our organisation.

We look forward to 2025 with confidence and renewed determination — knowing that the voices, talents and aspirations of the people we support will continue to drive us forward.

Elliot Sparks

Chair, Pennine Mencap Board of Trustees





Impact Report



179

This year we directly supported 179 adults with a learning disability, autism and a huge range of other disabilities and neurodiverse conditions

In 2024 we delivered a record number of group sessions, including choir, drama, cookery, dance, art, information/awareness and social activities

490



2600

The charity benefitted from over 2,600 hours of volunteers helping with events, front of house, kitchen, activities, marketing and governance

Across the Pennine Mencap pages on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X and TikTok, our content gained more views for than ever before

212K+

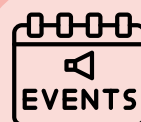


2205

This year our staff team handled a huge 2,205 phone calls, offering information, advice and support to service users, carers, family members and more

In 2024 year the Rhodes Bank Choir were inundated with bookings, delivering a magnificent total of 20 public performances all around Greater Manchester

20



10.9k

The second Pennine Mencap Celebration Ball was a huge fundraising success, with ticket sales, sponsorships, raffle and auction bids raising almost £11k

f 11.7k

On our most popular social platform, Pennine Mencap stimulated a strong public response, with a huge number of comments, donations, likes and shares

With weekly Dancersize sessions and our ShowAbility performance group, our service users clocked up over 1,000 hours of dance moves in 2024

62 040



458.4kg

Thanks to our partnership with Neighbourly, we collected almost half a ton of food from Aldi, Lidl and Sainsbury's stores for our Community Fridge

Despite a difficult climate for fundraising in 2024, we raised a strong amount from grant funders – you can find the breakdown in the Accounts section

£84.5K



171k+

With our weekly wanders with Walk Or Wheel Club, along with a number of extra trips throughout the year, we walked and wheeled a huge distance this year

With donations of goods and services, fundraising efforts and by providing volunteers, we were helped by 67 wonderful local businesses

67



1225

Over the course of 2024, Cookalong sessions saw our service users expertly prepare 1,225 portions of food using 48 different recipes



Social, Creative & Wellbeing Activities

Pennine **men**cap



Pennine Mencap is committed to facilitating high quality, creative opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries through wellbeing sessions, social activities and the arts.

Throughout 2024, Pennine Mencap delivered a broad timetable of activities, events, performances and learning opportunities, providing platforms for service users, old and new, to participate and express themselves.

We take pride in promoting independence, self-expression and inclusion across all activities, in direct alignment with the mission of the charity.

Health and Wellbeing Activities

Statistically, adults with learning disabilities are more likely to experience poorer health, reduced life expectancy and barriers to healthcare. Mondays Matter, a day focusing on health and wellbeing, was a product of the ongoing battle to try to combat the persistent health inequality our service users are facing.

Our weekly Dancercise! sessions provide opportunities for all to participate in high energy, fitness focused dance routines, in an environment that is inclusive of every individual's physical or mental needs. Similar to traditional dance-based fitness, which currently excludes or limits access to those with additional needs, Dancercise! incorporates popular music, club lighting and full body movement, with routines that are easy to learn and adaptable. Each routine has the choice of intensity level, including swapping out jogging for walking and substituting jumping for just bouncing or bending the knees gently. A demonstration of a chair version of the routine can also be shown.

"It cheers me up to be with my friends here, laughing and having a good time. It's like my second home."

Adrian
Service User



The WOW Club (Walk or Wheel) continued to thrive in 2024, offering accessible local walks in locations such as Alexandra Park, Dovestone Reservoir and themed walking tours across Manchester city centre. Each walk is carefully planned to ensure full accessibility, enabling service users with wheelchairs or mobility needs to participate equally. We recognise that reluctance to travel to unfamiliar places can present a barrier, so providing support around public transport and navigating busy environments is a key approach that has proven highly beneficial for all participants.

In addition, our service users have demonstrated a strong commitment to their communities by engaging in regular litter picks across local parks and beauty spots in Oldham and Manchester, alongside other local Learning Disability groups. This not only reflects their pride in their local environment but their willingness to support the community.

Creativity Club

Creativity Club takes place every Tuesday morning and provides a structured session of arts and crafts. Each session is designed around a central theme or key activity, encouraging participants to explore different creative mediums. Where possible, sessions are aligned with notable dates in the calendar such as Diwali, Easter and Christmas, as well as the different seasons. This thematic approach establishes continuity across the year, while offering variety and meaningful opportunities for creative engagement.

Following the success of our roof terrace project and the positive feedback from service users who valued the space as a. additional quiet area, we have now made the terrace refresh an annual feature of Creativity Club. This year, service users took part in cleaning and repainting the plant pots, as well as adding new flowers and greenery to enhance the outdoor sensory area for everyone to enjoy.

We make it a priority to display artwork created by service users throughout the centre, whether as decorations for parties or as part of window displays. Showcasing their work not only enhances the environment but also provides a sense of pride and achievement for participants. It stands as a clear example of the creativity that emerges from these sessions.

Rhodes Bank Choir

2024 has been an exceptional year for our choir, marked by the highest number of public performances to date.

The year began with a significant opportunity when Forever Manchester, a long-standing funder, invited the choir to perform at their annual birthday celebration. The event, attended by over 300 guests, showcased the positive impact Forever Manchester has had on communities and the organisations it supports. Our choir embraced the opportunity to perform at such a high-profile event with enthusiasm and excitement.

In addition, Forever Manchester arranged for the Rhodes Bank Choir to record their vocals in a professional studio, which were later incorporated into the live performance.

The performance was met with a standing ovation and stands out as one of the key highlights of 2024.



“Drama and choir are my favourites. I love showing what we can do when we perform in the community.”

Sue
Service User



Our next performance in 2024 was at Terence O'Grady, a local organisation providing evening activities for adults with learning disabilities. The choir performed for approximately an hour, with the audience enthusiastically dancing and singing along. The event was so well received that we have since been invited to return on several further occasions.

The summer months were particularly busy, with the Rhodes Bank Choir invited to perform at several community events, including the Doctor Kershaw's Summer Fayre, the Camberwell Park Summer Fayre and the Caritas Hate Crime Event. The strong relationships we have developed with these organisers have significantly raised the profile of Pennine Mencap and we are grateful to be invited back year after year.

Oldham Pride remains a highly anticipated event for the Rhodes Bank Choir and we were delighted to once again have the honour of opening the celebration. The event provides a valuable platform to strengthen connections within the local community while highlighting the contribution we make to supporting and celebrating the learning disability community in Oldham.

Throughout the year, the Rhodes Bank Choir also performed at our own fundraising events, including the Summer Fayre and the Celebration Ball. Having service users perform at these occasions is especially meaningful, as it provides a direct and powerful way to showcase the impact of our work. Their involvement brings a personal touch to our events and is consistently met with an overwhelmingly positive response.

To conclude the year, our annual Christmas Care Home Tour returned, bringing festive cheer to residents across Oldham and

Tameside. In 2024, we expanded the tour to include a visit to Tameside Hospital, making it our busiest Christmas week to date. Performances of much-loved Christmas classics were warmly received, with nursing staff, relatives, residents and patients all joining in to celebrate the season together.

Music Therapy

This year we continued our partnership with music therapy charity Nordoff and Robbins, building on our relationship with therapist Alan Wells. Following his student placement at Pennine Mencap in 2022-23, Alan returned fully qualified throughout 2024. In addition to 1:1 sessions, specialist small group work and our big percussion-based Pennine Sunshine Band, we also facilitated a free of charge joint project with neighbouring learning disability organisation OPAL. This culminated with a Music Therapy Extravaganza at Rhodes Bank Chambers in December, showcasing a year of amazing creative efforts.



"I like all the creative activities. Taking part gets me out and stops me being on my own."

Paul R
Service User



Wednesday Social

Wednesday Social continued to expand in 2024, enhanced by the introduction of themed parties and events throughout the year, including St Patricks Day, 1950s day, Cinco de mayo and Halloween. Wednesday Social has continued to be promoted as our introduction session to meet new people, become familiar with the centre and staff and settle in, before committing to a more structured activity. Tabletop activities, karaoke and bingo are on offer, as well as a weekly quiz, all which contribute to a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Stage Right Performing Arts

Throughout 2024, Stage Right Performing Arts concentrated on developing their skills, across the three core disciplines of Musical Theatre; Dancing, Singing and Acting. This is where the project, A night at the Musicals came from. The primary objective was to enable performers to adopt a range of characters within a cabaret style production of scenes from well known musicals such as Moulin Rouge, The Lion King and My Fair Lady. The fully accessible performance provided an opportunity to showcase the progress achieved through weekly rehearsals and also evidence the range of the cast.

Showability


At Pennine Mencap, creative expression through the arts is at the heart of what we do. In 2024, we launched Showability, a dedicated performance-based group for service users who wanted to learn dance routines and perform either on stage or at events in the community.

The group provided an opportunity to explore a variety of choreographed routines, introducing different dance styles, formations and the use of props. For those with a little more confidence, there was also the chance to develop solo pieces to songs of their own choosing, which could then be showcased at future performances and events.

Each term ran for six weeks, with routines carefully broken down and rehearsed to ensure participants could master and refine the choreography. The feedback from everyone involved was overwhelmingly positive and it was inspiring to see the dancers' skills, confidence and creativity grow with every session.

Friday Night Club

Throughout 2024, we continued the process of reimagining Friday Night Club as an event-based service rather than simply a drop-in social club. This shift has been highly successful in differentiating it not only from our own Wednesday social sessions but also from other evening social opportunities in the area for adults with additional needs.



“Showability is my favourite thing. I really like it when we dance as a group.”

Jo
Service User

A key factor in this success has been our imaginative use of monthly themes, which help create a sense of excitement and give each Friday Night Club its own distinct identity. The themes we've chosen throughout the year have reflected the interests and strengths of our regular service user group in Tameside.

Highlights have included a Strictly Come Dancing night, an American Diner themed Friday Night Club and a Murder Mystery Dinner Party, during which staff and volunteers performed a fully scripted play while serving a three-course meal to almost 40 attendees.

By taking this approach – and adding regular extra touches such as a full-scale photo booth with props and costumes – we have made significant strides in establishing a new identity for Friday Night Club.

At the same time, it remains an important part of our offer as our longest-standing activity in Tameside, providing a strong link to the borough where the charity first established its activities in 2012. It also continues to be a vital point of contact for both regular and new attendees, offering access to information, advice and signposting from staff and volunteers, alongside the warm welcome, hearty food and companionship that define this increasingly unique monthly gathering.

Cookalong

Throughout 2024, Cookalong remained one of our favourite ways to encourage independent skill-building and creativity through the medium of food. Over the course of the year, we celebrated cultural and religious occasions, marked local, national and global food celebration days and embraced exciting spontaneous ideas that took us on unusual culinary journeys – keeping our service users stimulated and entertained every Friday morning.

Given the high percentage of individuals in our service user group who live with diabetes and other health conditions related to obesity, as well as common challenges around portion control, it has been essential to maintain a careful balance between promoting healthy choices and preserving the creativity and fun for which Cookalong has become known. Creating this individualised health-centred approach in a group drop-in activity is a challenge, with varying dietary needs, skill levels and personal preferences all needing to be balanced, while still ensuring that each participant feels engaged, supported and able to develop confidence and independence in their cooking.



"I enjoy performing and really appreciate how the staff support me with my art projects."

Anthony
Service User



In 2024, some of the recipes we explored together ranged from simple regional classics such as ploughman's lunch and toad in the hole, to more elaborate dishes such as chestnut en croûte, as well as international favourites like aloo gobi and Chinese-inspired Across-the-Bridge soup.

Occasional sweet dishes, such as traditional English afternoon tea presented on individual three-tier stands, have been exciting treats that add a sense of celebration and indulgence to the sessions, while showcasing how presentation can elevate even simple recipes into something special.

As attendance at in-person Cookalong sessions has continued to rise steadily, we've refined our methodology, room layouts and cookery techniques to meet an increasingly diverse range of needs and ability levels. Food hygiene, cross-contamination and allergen awareness remain ever-present considerations, integrated into every session to support the development of safe and sustainable cooking skills.

Feedback from service users consistently highlights that one of the most valuable aspects of Cookalong is its ability to build confidence and practical independence. While the sessions are often quite adventurous – making the most of the kitchen facilities at Pennine Mencap – they reliably provide useful ideas, information and hands-on experience. This, in turn, helps participants feel more confident about buying ingredients and trying recipes at home that they might otherwise have found daunting.





Community Engagement



2024 has seen a huge uplift in community engagement as Pennine Mencap has forged connections and partnerships with a range of new organisations across Greater Manchester. This increase builds on pre-existing relations with other charities, public bodies, community associations and local businesses around Oldham, Tameside and our immediately neighbouring boroughs.

Off to a Flying Start: Forever Manchester Birthday Party

Early into 2024, our first opportunity for community engagement was the Forever Manchester Birthday Party, held at the Kimpton Clock Tower Hotel, with over 500 guests in attendance. This annual celebration for the biggest community foundation in Greater Manchester is a hugely visible platform, bringing together passionate representatives of communities from all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester.



The Rhodes Bank Choir were given the incredible opportunity to record and perform their own cover of Take That's 'Rule the World' at the event. The audience's reception of the performance was electric, with all 500 guests stood on their feet, cheering and applauding. Significantly, this performance led to a number of great opportunities for the charity, including creating fruitful new links with organisations, such as community radio stations, from across Greater Manchester.



Creating Collaborative Experiences

A theme established throughout 2024 has been creating opportunities for our service users to see and experience new and exciting things. The staff team decided to organise a number of trips that were fun and had strong themes and educational elements to them but first and foremost, were chosen by the service users themselves. The first of these trips

was to Salford Quays and Media City. Service Users got the opportunity to look around the Lowry, the Quays and Media City itself.

Throughout the year we also took trips to Etherow Park, Ordsall Hall, Fletcher Moss, the Sea Life Centre and the Museum of Science and Industry. These were all local outings, where we engaged with their services to provide an accessible and inclusive trip for our service users. Ordsall Hall, in particular, was a great example of working with the organisation to create a bespoke visit just for our service users. We had a guided tour with a member of staff who was trained to work with people with learning disabilities. The visit to Ordsall demonstrated that with a cooperative and inclusive approach it is possible to make historical and cultural destinations truly accessible; a mark of this trip's success is that the service users have already asked to go back for a repeat visit.

Looking further afield, during 2024, we have also taken trips to Blackpool, Chester and even organised and successfully delivered a bespoke holiday to Caernarfon. The trips to both Blackpool and Chester, gave us the opportunity to create a great relationship with KMatt Coaches who have provided us with a brilliant service on several occasions. A local firm, who are happy to support a local charity. Both trips were educational as well as fun. In Blackpool we took in the sites and the got the chance to spend the afternoon in the incredible Tower Ballroom. The service users were in their element! Likewise, in Chester, the service users toured the cathedral and even met a roman centurion! This is still talked about nearly a year later!

Connecting with New Partners

Successfully across 2024 we have created links with a number of community organisations from around Oldham and beyond. Having attended a number of Engagement Network events, hosted by the Greater Manchester NHS Engagement Team, we have established new relationships with SPARK Oldham, Caritas and Inclusive Bytes to name just a few. These connections have been a great way for the service users to display the work of the charity; our choir has performed twice at different Caritas events, and we have also had stalls at a number of SPARK community events.

Continuing on the theme of new connections, during 2024 we have established links with both Oldham Community Leisure and Cycling UK. The latter has proven to be a great opportunity for our service users, since our first meeting with them we have joined up to offer a number of accessible riding sessions. These have taken place in beautiful landscaped locations ranging from Hyde Park in Tameside to Peel Park in Salford, taking advantage of Cycling UK's range of accessible bikes. The varied seating, steering and pedaling configurations of the bikes and trikes ensured there was a suitable option for everyone, regardless of any difficulties with coordination, balance or physical strength.

Feedback from the service users has been really encouraging, confirming this partnership offers something unique which we would not have been able to realistically provide in isolation. This partnership is something we are hoping to continue into 2025.



Shared Voices: Success Through Song

One major new community-based connection we have established this year is with Failsworth Community Pop Choir. Laura, the choir leader, reached out to our choir and asked us to perform alongside them for two shows; importantly this placed the Rhodes Bank Choir on an equitable platform with their counterparts in the Failsworth choir, making this a fantastic opportunity to promote inclusion and co-production.

The Rhodes Bank Choir performed 'He Lives in You' without lyrics, with choreography and in front of 300 people at a public event in Chadderton. This event was a major success and thanks to the amazing efforts of both choirs and the big audiences we managed to raise £1000 over two nights. Since these performances, the Failsworth Community Pop Choir has gone on to support the work of the charity by sponsoring our Celebration Ball.

We look forward to further relationships we will have in the year to come, having organised another two performances with them.

Solidifying Strong Partnerships

Building on the successes of the choir's performances at Forever Manchester and with the Failsworth Community Pop Choir, the choir and our newly established ShowAbility Dance Group performed al fresco at Dr Kershaw's Summer Fayre. This was met with warm praise and highlighted that Pennine Mencap is also keen to turn its hand towards supporting other local charities.

This performance built on our existing relationship with Dr Kershaws, but this led to further connections arising from the goodwill generated on the day. From our participation at the Dr Kershaws event, we forged a friendship with the compères who also happen to be the organisers of numerous other community events, including Alkrington Christmas Lights Switch On. This proved to be a brilliant opportunity, with the event organisers not just inviting us to perform at the Alkrington Switch On, but providing transport, food, drinks and even a substantial donation towards the work of the charity.

Moreover, throughout the year we have continued to develop mutually supportive relationships with a number of organisations, including Hurst Community Centre, Oldham Pride, Oldham College, Action Together and Billingtons. These connections have once again proven to bear fruit for the charity. Not only have they helped us to raise the profile of our work and mission across Oldham and Tameside, but have also helped us to facilitate the important work to aim to do every day.





We continue to rely heavily on Hurst Community Centre as our second home, continuing our good relationship with the Centre's management committee. We use this facility for our large events, such as Friday Night Club, our Summer Fayre and live performances by our Stage Right Performing Arts company. We hope to make more use of Hurst as an important partnership venue in the coming year for more midweek activities.

A Ball for All

In November, we were proud to host our second Celebration Ball. Again, we chose to hold the event at Chadderton Town Hall, with a three-course dinner, live performances, auction and raffle. This event was a huge success, raising eleven thousand pounds for the charity. Not only was the outcome amazing but the event brought together a huge number of our supporters. The room was filled with businesses and associations that have established links with the charity throughout the last decade, all of whom were there to show their support to the vital work we are doing across Greater Manchester.



This year however we chose to use the time leading up to the event as a major profile increasing opportunity. For thirty days leading up to the event, we contacted a new business or organisation, who could sponsor us. This gave the event a much wider reach, in terms of publicity, but also brought in a number of new and exciting event sponsors. This included our Food Ambassador celebrity chef, Adam Reid, who donated a meal for two at his restaurant The French, combining it with an overnight stay at the Midland Hotel. Support like this helps massively in the effectiveness of the event and is crucial in helping community engagement to and from the charity.



Feeling a Festive Glow

As we approached December and the Christmas period, community event opportunities really took an uplift. It is both a joyful and challenging time of year throughout the community as a whole, but especially for our service user group. The choir were invited to attend a huge number of different events across Greater Manchester and we accepted as many of these booking requests as possible, both to give back to the wider community and to offer further opportunities for our service users to experience the uplifting feelgood benefits of showcasing their talent and goodwill to other local residents.



In the 2024 festive season we performed in four care homes, two of which are new to the charity. Further to our role at the Alkrington Christmas Lights Switch On we also took centre stage in the Spindles Shopping Centre ahead of the Oldham Lights Switch on. All of this is in addition to singing at Tameside General Hospital, which was a wonderful opportunity to give something back to staff and patients in Tameside – the borough where almost half of our service users live. This occasion was also an opportunity to solidify our links with the NHS trust, which we believe will lead to important partnership work in the years to come.



Following on from this we also got the chance to be the entertainment at an Over 60s Christmas Party, hosted by Dr Kershaws. This performance was a hit with the guests and really boosted the mood of both service users and guests alike. As well as this, at the start of the month we were involved in the Christmas Tree Festival at Oldham Parish Church. Service Users created decorations that adorned the tree for two weeks. We were also lucky enough to receive a tour of the church and listen to the organ and sing some carols. The feedback from the service users was hugely positive and we will look to do this again next year.



Overall community engagement throughout 2024 has been hugely positive. Establishing links with organisations from across Greater Manchester proven to be very beneficial for the charity as a whole and most importantly our service users. This is not to say that we haven't had our challenges, for example attendance at some events has been low and the lack of a charity vehicle has been difficult. However, despite these things, we have seen a huge amount of growth in this area and we are heading into 2025 with a positive outlook for the charity, now knowing that we have forged a number of new relationships with a range of organisations which have complimentary objectives in the community.



Volunteering



Before 2024, the charity consistently struggled to recruit and maintain volunteers. The main reason for this, as indicated in volunteers' exit interviews, was successful career progression. Whilst the charity recognises this as a positive outcome for those who have volunteered with us until opportunities arose elsewhere, it meant high turnover – and we were generally unable to rely on volunteer contributions.



Pennine Mencap has previously lacked a formal recruitment process for volunteers. Historically, almost all of our volunteers have sought out the charity independently or were referred to us by the Jobcentre. In 2024, the charity aimed to rectify this by putting more effort into advertising, developing further volunteering opportunities, and improving the supervision of volunteers. We were able to do this successfully with the help of grant funding from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) for our Finding A Foothold project, allowing us to employ staff to coordinate and deliver the charity's volunteering programme.



The main aim of the Finding A Foothold project was to improve employability outcomes for adults with disabilities. Statistically, this group have some of the highest rates of unemployment. The majority of our service users are aged between 25 and 50. This group grew up in a society with little awareness of disabilities and low expectations of people with disabilities. This has left them without adequate qualifications, training or experience. Our project focused on skill building which could lead to better employability prospects.

As part of the Finding A Foothold project, we embedded skill building into our daily activity provision. This included developing communication skills in our Stage Right drama workshops, creativity in Creativity Club, technical skills in Cookalong and communication skills within our social groups. Some project participants received opportunities to engage in volunteering roles within Pennine Mencap. Some examples included taking part in reception duties, serving lunch, pot-washing, marketing and housekeeping.

In addition to this, we opened a Pop-Up Charity Shop at Rhodes Bank Chambers. Our service users were responsible for collecting donations, steaming clothing, pricing items, creating displays, managing stock, greeting customers, completing sales and tidying up at the end of the day. An impressive 56 people with disabilities were involved with all different aspects of setting up, promoting and running our charity shop between February and July 2024.

Our volunteer co-ordinator was responsible for the recruitment and management of volunteers. Recruitment was made easy through connections with other organisations such as Action Together, Tameside College and Oldham college. All of our volunteering opportunities are now advertised on Action Together's website, and we receive notifications each time somebody expresses an interest in one of our roles.

Action Together's social prescribing team are very supportive of our work and often assist individuals to apply to volunteer with us. This contributed hugely to the volume of applicants we received throughout 2024. Since, publishing our adverts on the Action Together website we have received an average of 5 expressions of interest per month.

Our 2024 volunteering opportunities included: Volunteer Receptionist, Volunteer Kitchen Assistant and Volunteer Support Worker. Since recruiting these specific job roles, there has been a noticeable difference in the attitude of our volunteers. Feedback from volunteers highlights the importance of having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. It is also clear that our volunteer co-ordinator has made our volunteers feel confident in their roles.

We are delighted that following this successful project, we have been invited to apply to GMCA/WEA to continue the Finding A Foothold project for a further 6 months in 2025.



"At my other volunteering job, they never told me what I should be doing and I didn't know who to go to for clarification. I feel supported here."

Elizabeth Volunteer Support Worker





Steps Towards Supported Living



Supported Living represents one of the three main pillars of our fundraising and income generation strategy. In 2024, this area was formally embedded within a clear, structured plan to guide our efforts in generating unrestricted income for the charity. We are therefore especially pleased to report a major step forward in what we believe may become the most sustainable source of revenue to support Pennine Mencap's work into the future.

From Vision to Reality

After three years of groundwork through our trading subsidiary, Pennine Mencap Supported Housing Limited, we reached a significant milestone. The subsidiary owns two properties in Tameside that have been under gradual renovation in preparation for use as supported living accommodation for adults whose needs are not well met by the limited supported housing options currently available in the area.

One property is a four-bedroom shared house, while the second is a mews-style building that previously comprised four separate flats. Renovation work on both has progressed steadily, though at a modest pace, due to funding limitations and the inevitable challenges of modernising older residential properties.

We are deeply grateful to Reliance Bank for their continued support with this project, having first come on board in 2021. Their provision of a low-charge mortgage enabled not only the purchase of these properties but also the initiation and progression of essential renovation works.

Welcoming Our First Resident

A major highlight of 2024 came in August, when all work on the shared house was completed and Tameside Council formally approved its use as a supported living property for adults with learning disabilities. Soon after, we proudly welcomed our first

resident – a long-standing service user who has been involved with Pennine Mencap since the charity's founding in 2012.

Having supported this individual through many challenges and milestones over the past 12 years, it is a source of immense pride that we are now able to offer them a safe, secure and supported semi-independent home for the first time in their life.

As the property has capacity for four residents, our next focus will be on identifying two additional tenants who are a suitable match to share the home (the fourth bedroom is allocated as a staff room and sleep-in space for provision of overnight support). We are approaching this process with care and deliberation, recognising that compatibility and quality of experience are essential to ensuring the long-term success of this new chapter in our service delivery.



Continuing the Journey

Work has also continued on the second property, the building of four flats. We have determined that, in order to use it most effectively for supported living, the internal layout must be substantially reconfigured. This will include combining two smaller flats to create a larger, more flexible space capable of housing two cohabiting adults with learning disabilities.

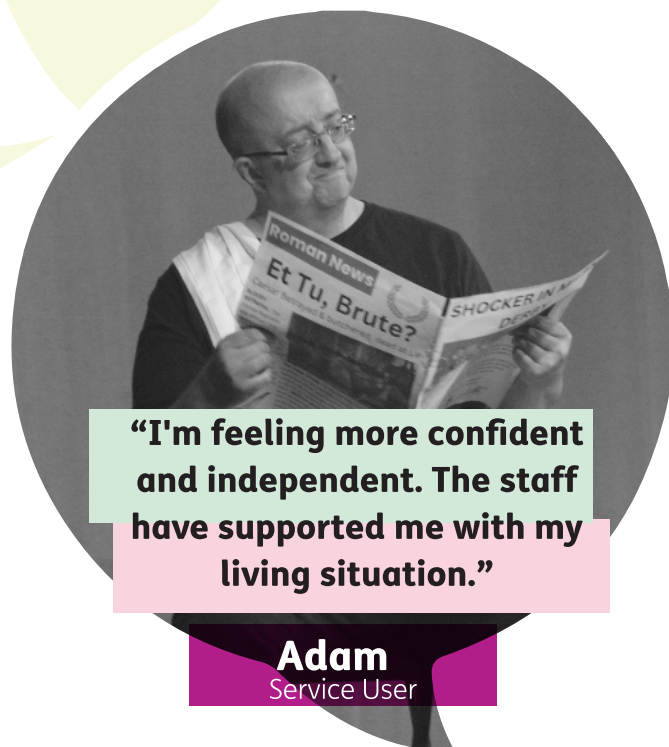
The scale of this work is significant, but we aim to complete renovations by the end of 2025, bringing both properties into full use and expanding the supported living opportunities we can offer.

Fair Trades

Our progress would not have been possible without the continued goodwill and cooperation of a range of local tradespeople – builders, joiners, roofers, plumbers, gas engineers, decorators and flooring specialists – many of whom have provided services at competitive rates or contributed materials free of charge.

This generosity has had a tangible impact. For example, one local supplier donated a full suite of high-quality bathroom fixtures, including an ex-display luxury bathtub, for the shared house. Contributions like this have been invaluable in enabling us to reach the point where our first supported living property is now complete and occupied.

We are confident that, with the continued support of our community partners and local businesses, we will see the shared house flourish and the second property brought to completion in the near future. Together, these developments mark a transformative milestone for Pennine Mencap – one that deepens our impact and ensures greater long-term stability for the organisation and the people we support.



"I'm feeling more confident and independent. The staff have supported me with my living situation."

Adam
Service User



Destination Caernarfon:

The First Pennine Mencap Holiday

In March 2024 the charity took a group of 20 service users to beautiful, historic North Wales for four days of fun. This wasn't just a holiday; this was big news for Pennine Mencap. It had been a long-standing ambition discussed within the charity for many years, but for a long time it felt like an unachievable dream.

We could never previously muster enough staff and volunteer time to organise and put a holiday into action on top of all our day-to-day activities and other long-term projects. There had also always been concerns about making a holiday financially accessible for our service users, given that many of them experience significant economic hardship – while still making it a memorable, high quality experience for them.

Then, at the end of 2023, the service users collectively expressed a wish to go on holiday together, directly asking for our support in facilitating that. Presented with such a strongly expressed desire, we were galvanized and resolved to finally make it happen. As a team we found a venue that was accessible and housed a large number of visitors. Due to the success of our 2023 fundraising we were able to subsidise the holiday, which meant the costings for service users were majorly reduced.

The venue we found was called The Bevan, an adapted large accommodation made for group holiday bookings. It had 24 adapted twin rooms with ensembles, games room, cinema space and incredible views of north Wales. It was a great space for the service users and really made the holiday special.

Over the four days we planned a trip to Caernarfon, where the service users took part in a town exploration trail, taking in the harbour, medieval town walls and the royal castle. We then enjoyed a three-course meal at The Castle Pub, where everyone got to watch the sunset on the harbour. It was a really wonderful moment, with Karl looking out contentedly and simply saying 'it really helps you, being by the sea'.

The feedback we received from everyone who attended the holiday was thoroughly encouraging. On the second day we took the service users on an outing to Llandudno, where they enjoyed time wandering around the shops, down the pier and enjoying a nice lunch by the seaside. Bobby stated how 'the holiday has really helped my mental health' and Sue explained 'how the holiday had brought all the service users closer together'.





The feedback received really enforced the importance of this first Pennine Mencap holiday and showed that such trips can be a vital part of the work we do for our service users. We finished the holiday with a slumber party, pyjamas on, buffet tea and a good film. This simple evening of relaxed companionship really rounded off the few days. It gave the service users the opportunity to let go of any residual anxieties and just be present as the best versions of themselves.

There was a clear decision that we must do this again. We can't wait for next year's holiday!

10,000 Metres of Manchester Fundraising

Opportunities such as the holiday to Caernarfon are only possible thanks to generous individual giving. Fundraising from the public creates unrestricted funds, which enable us to subsidise activities that grant funders won't support. This is how we can make them accessible to as many of our service users as possible.

A fantastic example of public fundraising in 2024 came from volunteer Chris, who trained for months alongside Shona to take part in the Manchester 10k on Sunday 26th May. It was a challenge for Chris as a runner, while Shona showed incredible tenacity and resilience throughout. Together, their efforts raised over £500 for Pennine Mencap.

Well done and thank you both!





Health & Wellbeing Inequalities

Adults with a learning disability on average die 19.5 years younger than the general population.

LeDeR also reported that 38% of people with a mild or moderate learning disability died an avoidable death.

Mencap website (www.mencap.org.uk), 2025

The term ‘avoidable death’ is used to describe a death that could have been prevented with good quality healthcare. One of the major barriers to healthcare for people with learning disabilities is anxiety or lack of confidence. At Pennine Mencap we recognise this barrier is common among other vulnerable groups, including autistic people and those who have acquired brain injuries.

The Pennine Mencap team are passionate about reducing health inequalities and work incredibly hard to support service users to live long, meaningful lives. We do this by providing daytime activities geared towards promoting health and wellbeing for all.

Our activity centre is designed to be a safe and warm space for vulnerable adults, where they can socialise with others, access support and receive a nutritious meal. As well as this, our activities provide opportunities for skill building and creative outlets. The empathy and patience of staff mean everybody feels welcome and accepted.

Through our activity provision we are reducing social isolation, encouraging people to be active and creative, increasing self-esteem; and above all else, creating a sense of togetherness. This highlights that ‘Wellbeing’ sits at the very core of the charity’s work.

In 2024, we received a generous donation of £1000 which enabled us to create a Breakout Space within our activity centre, offering a quiet area for service users when they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious. It is a low-stimulating environment with comfortable seating and self-regulation tools.

Physical Health

According to the NHS, 37% of people with learning disabilities who underwent a BMI check in 2019 were classified as overweight or obese.



“My favourite thing is spending time with my friends here. It's really good for me.”

Dan
Service User



“I felt inspired to do more cycling”

Allan
Service User

That is why in 2024 we committed to facilitating 150 minutes of physical activity per week, as recommended by the NHS. This led to the formation of our inclusive dance company: ShowAbility, who rehearse for 45 minutes, every Wednesday afternoon. We continued to offer dance-based exercise classes, a walking group and performing arts activities throughout 2024.

In February, Defibshop kindly donated a portable Defibrillator to Pennine Mencap. Since then, we have been able to facilitate physical activity safely and with confidence, knowing we have a potentially life-saving device on site in case of a cardiovascular emergency.

In addition to our 150 minutes of weekly physical activity, we also took part in The Inclusive Cycling project with Cycling UK. We attended several cycling sessions in the 2024, where service users were introduced to a wide range of adapted cycles. The group practised various skills such as braking, changing gear, adjusting speed, road safety and cyclist etiquette. This was a fantastic opportunity for our service users, many of whom told us they had not cycled since being children.

In celebration of our commitment to being more active, the charity proudly attended Oldham College’s National Fitness Day event. Hosted in the college’s sports hall, this event brought together an impressive range of services promoting health and fitness. Throughout the day, we demonstrated our inclusive Dancercise activity and invited members of the public to join in too.

Community Health Champions

In 2024, Pennine Mencap were invited to become Health Champions for the learning disability community. The charity received support to promote NHS health initiatives such as cancer screenings, vaccinations, annual health checks, and the measles outbreak. We became part of the Health Champion network, enabling us to stay up to date with accurate health information which we could then share in more accessible and engaging ways within our provision. We invited representatives from Answer Cancer to discuss various screening programmes, raising awareness and encouraging uptake.

An important element of this project provided staff with appropriate awareness training, enabling them to support service users to make and attend appointments. We recognise that support and encouragement from staff is the most successful tool for reducing anxiety and developing confidence. This is a service we hope to continue to develop in the future.



“I like the socialising”

Shona
Service User



Pennine Mencap Advisory Panel

Pennine **mencap**



Introducing Pennine Mencap Advisory Panel

In 2024, Pennine Mencap took a significant step forward in deepening service user involvement by formally establishing the Pennine Mencap Advisory Panel (PMAP). The panel was created to provide a structured, inclusive platform where service users could actively represent the views, concerns and aspirations of their peers, contributing directly to the charity's day-to-day operations and longer-term development. The journey to launch PMAP was grounded in thoughtful planning and a commitment to accessibility, with a goal of helping every voice to be heard in a way that suited individual communication preferences.



Building an Inclusive and Accessible Structure

The process began with extensive groundwork to map out the structure of PMAP and to design an accessible application process. Recognizing the diverse communication and cognitive needs of service users, the application invited submissions in any combination of written, spoken or drawn formats. This openness allowed candidates to express themselves in ways they felt comfortable, removing traditional barriers to participation. Selection procedures were carefully calibrated to ensure fairness, acknowledging the unique challenges some applicants faced while maintaining a focus on identifying those best positioned to advocate for the collective interests of the service user community.



Once formed, the PMAP board was tasked with meeting quarterly to discuss issues, provide feedback and plan ongoing projects. Each meeting was designed to foster equal participation and ensure a variety of perspectives were represented. PMAP members were given opportunities not only to raise anonymous compliments, concerns and complaints for the attention of staff and trustees but also to develop initiatives between meetings, such as surveying other service users to gather ideas for future activities.

Setting Expectations and Early Priorities

At the inaugural PMAP meeting in April, the purpose and potential of the panel were clearly outlined. Staff emphasized the role of PMAP members as ambassadors for the charity, chosen for their ability to represent service users positively and constructively. The group discussed practical steps to increase their visibility and approachability, including consideration of the introduction of badges or other physical identifiers to signal their role. Given the range of communication abilities within the wider service user group, creative solutions such as photo badges and colour coding were proposed to ensure clarity.

Discussions also highlighted the importance of educating members about each other's disabilities to foster mutual understanding, with suggestions to invite guest speakers for this purpose. The April meeting revealed a shared enthusiasm for expanding activity options, with members suggesting new sessions such as yoga, tai chi and guided meditation to complement existing health and wellbeing programs. Music therapy and choir were praised for their mental health benefits, sparking ideas for accessible adaptations like visual song aids to enhance inclusivity during performances.

Beyond activity programming, the group reflected on social spaces within the centre. Members advocated for improvements such as using the ground floor windows to display artwork, creating a more vibrant community atmosphere visible to passers-by. There was also a strong appetite for trips and outings, with members brainstorming accessible destinations reachable by public transport, emphasizing the value of shared experiences and community building.

Growing Confidence and Influence

By July, PMAP members were demonstrating increased confidence in their roles. Discussions about volunteering and fundraising reflected a growing sense of ownership, with members taking initiative in leading tabletop activities, managing rooms and exploring innovative ideas such as online charity sales. Positive feedback on existing activities like dancercise and walking groups was balanced with suggestions for themed entertainment and further afield trips, underlining the members' keen interest in shaping a dynamic and enjoyable program.

Food and safety also featured in conversations, with practical recommendations such as portion control, the use of safety knives and diversifying meal options, reflecting PMAP's holistic engagement with daily life at the charity. Fundraising efforts were bolstered by ideas for a tuck shop and increased promotion of the charity shop in local communities, demonstrating a commitment to supporting the organisation's longer term sustainability.

Learning, Challenges and Adaptation

While the first year of PMAP brought many successes, it also surfaced challenges, particularly in navigating diverse communication styles and occasional differences of opinion among members. Recognizing the emotional investment involved and the complexities of managing group dynamics, the panel recommended introducing an independent facilitator to guide meetings. This role would support the navigation of agendas and mediate discussions, ensuring all voices could be heard in a respectful and productive environment.



This reflective approach to improvement signals PMAP's maturity and the charity's commitment to continuous learning. The feedback provided by PMAP members has already proven invaluable to staff and trustees, offering fresh insights that have influenced decision-making and enhanced service user experiences.

Looking Forward: PMAP's Role in 2025 and Beyond

As PMAP moves into its second year, the focus is on refining processes and building on the foundations laid in 2024. Plans include strengthening support for members, expanding the scope of their projects and enhancing the panel's visibility both within the charity and in the wider community. There is a shared ambition to embed PMAP more deeply into the charity's governance and to ensure service users have a genuine and ongoing say in shaping the future of Pennine Mencap.

The establishment of PMAP marks a vital milestone in the charity's commitment to co-production and meaningful engagement. By empowering service users to represent their peers, advocate for improvements and celebrate successes, Pennine Mencap is fostering a culture of inclusion, respect and shared ownership. The journey of PMAP in 2024 illustrates the transformative potential of listening, adapting and growing together – and it sets an strong precedent for what can be achieved in the years to come.





Advocacy



Advocacy

As communication systems become increasingly automated and not just digital but AI-driven, the landscape of how people access basic, essential services is changing rapidly. There is no denying the efficiencies these technologies bring on a broadscale, yet this progress is not without a cost. For many people with learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical impairments, sensory challenges and neurodivergent presentations such as autism or ADHD, the shift toward overly structured, automated communication is creating significant new barriers.



At Pennine Mencap, we are aware of the impact this has already had on many of our service users who struggle with their literacy, numeracy, memory, IT skills and their fear of consequences (real or perceived) if they 'get it wrong' when trying to deal with services who have a substantial influence over their lives. The services which have a growing reliance on digital forms, online journals, apps, booking systems, ID checking measures and voice recognition software, range from banks and utility providers to dentists and DWP – services that are essential our service users.



As part of confronting these realities, our advice and advocacy work is more critical than ever. While the large organisations which are central to daily life simultaneously promote equality, inclusion and diversity as important ethical virtues, they also embrace automation in ways which can entirely contradict the values they promote. Many of the people we support are the people who are 'left behind' by change.

The Invisible Walls of Automated Communication

The adoption of automated phone lines, online portals, AI chatbots and multi-factor authentication systems is becoming the default across public bodies, banks, utility providers and other essential services. What is often sold as progress or digital inclusion is, in practice, a series of hurdles that block access to fundamental rights and services for many people we support.

These systems demand not only the ability to navigate complex technology but also to manage multiple passwords, codes, authenticator apps and layers of personal data verification before a human being can even be reached. This is not simply a matter of 'getting with the times'; for a significant proportion of our service users, these demands are a barrier that excludes them outright.

The narrative that these challenges primarily affect older adults conveniently obscures the reality. People with disabilities, mental health difficulties and neurodivergence are systematically excluded despite the rhetoric of inclusion and diversity. Large institutions tout their values, yet their automated systems operate with little regard for the diverse needs of their users, pushing a significant and varied group to the margins.

The Myth of Digital Inclusion

There is a widespread but misleading assumption that technology is universally empowering. While many do benefit from streamlined digital services, this overlooks the stark inequalities that automation exacerbates. The systems designed to increase efficiency often sacrifice flexibility, discretion and human judgement – qualities essential for meaningful inclusion.

For people facing cognitive or sensory challenges, or living with fluctuating mental health conditions, the loss of face-to-face or even straightforward telephone contact is not just an inconvenience; it can cut them off from essential services. Being forced to engage with impersonal automated systems, often programmed without understanding or accommodation of these realities, results in exclusion and distress.

These in turn lead to real-life problems, ranging from suspension of benefits needed to buy basic shopping and top up the gas meter, to the loss of teeth which could be saved because it was too complicated to book an appointment with a dentist. While we aim to make our advice and advocacy services easily approachable for those who already access group activities or other elements of our services, we often only find out about such problems when it's too late.

It's hard for anyone to ask for help, but harder still if you are contending with the challenges of a disability – and even moreso when it feels like the issue you're struggling with is something so fundamental that it makes you feel 'silly' or 'incapable' for needing support. This is increasingly becoming the case, as it is proving harder than ever for many of our service users to navigate the processes that should be simpler and more accessible than they are.

The Importance of Human Advocacy

Against this backdrop, advocacy becomes more than a helpful service – it can be a lifeline. Pennine Mencap's work is increasingly about breaking through these automated barriers, providing the representation and support that many service users simply cannot secure for themselves in a digitised world.



"Pennine Mencap is always here and always open for us. Because staff help me with bills and appointments, I have more understanding of them."

Scott
Service User



We advocate not only by stepping in during crises but by empowering individuals with the skills to engage with these systems where possible. However, the very complexity and inflexibility of automated processes mean that independence is a huge challenge for many, making advocacy indispensable, especially for our service users who live alone, don't have a full-time carer or don't have a strong family support network.

The Toll on Mental Health

The impact of automated systems is felt most acutely where mental health conditions intersect with other disabilities. Anxiety, depression and more complex conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia often make the sustained interaction with bureaucratic systems overwhelming or impossible without support. They can also be quite triggering, causing negative behaviours and beliefs. Failing to meet a requirement for Universal Credit or missing a payment deadline on a bill can be enough to cause adverse reactions that can be deeply harmful.



"The help I've had with my bills and being better in contact with my finances has taken a weight off my shoulders. Things like this make us more independent in the real world."

Karl
Service User

Repeated encounters with automated phone menus, inaccessible websites and rigid data verification processes lead to a sense of failure and then withdrawal, increased isolation and disconnection from essential services. Pennine Mencap works with people whose lives are made more difficult – not by their disabilities alone – but by a society that has embraced digital systems without ensuring it remains inclusive.



Navigating a Complex Landscape

From applying for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to handling utility bills or negotiating telecoms contracts, the practical demands placed on service users have ballooned in an era dominated by digital access and identity management. The

need to juggle numerous passwords, security measures and online forms is far from trivial – it is a constant source of stress and exclusion.

Even straightforward transactions, such as replacing a lost bank card or renewing a travel pass, have become obstacles for many. Our advocacy helps translate and navigate these processes, but the fact remains that such everyday tasks should not require extensive intervention.


Despite the undeniable importance of advocacy in mitigating these systemic barriers, it remains under-resourced and often invisible. Pennine Mencap continues this work because the need is urgent and growing. Yet, the charity's ability to meet demand is restricted by a lack of dedicated funding. This remains a challenge we have yet to identify a clear solution to, other than to gratefully acknowledge our continued reliance on the additional efforts made by staff and volunteers to go above and beyond the expectations of their roles within the charity. Everyone in the team does so by assisting service users when they are in crisis, making their time and understanding available whenever a knowledgeable companion is the best solution to a problem.

Looking Ahead

As automation and AI become further embedded in public and private services, the risk of widening inequality grows. The direction we are heading in threatens to leave behind those who already face multiple, intersecting disadvantages – whether from disability, health inequality, socio-economic hardship, or all of these combined.

At Pennine Mencap, many people we support experience all of these disadvantages and more. Our commitment to advocacy is unwavering because the consequences of ignoring these challenges are severe. In this respect, advocacy is a safeguarding mechanism – a means of giving voice to people who feel reduced to silence. Technological progress should not come at the expense of dignity or equal access. Every voice matters.





Grant Fundraising & Income Generation in 2024

Pennine **men**cap



The year 2024 was characterised by a general reduction in incoming funds, particularly due to a significant decline in grant funding towards our core operating costs. This was primarily the result of the conclusion of our three-year funding package from the National Lottery Community Fund for our Branching Out project.

That grant had fully supported the employment costs of three full-time staff members for the past three years, ending in December 2023. As a small charity operating across a high-demand area, our staff team is one of our most valuable assets and sustaining those roles has presented a considerable challenge throughout 2024.

With few new opportunities offering support on the same scale as the National Lottery, we were required to recalibrate our approach and refocus our fundraising efforts toward short-term, grants. While this approach has yielded fewer results than hoped, we are pleased to report a number of meaningful successes that demonstrate resilience and adaptability in our income generation strategy.

Finding a Foothold Project

A particular highlight of the year was the success of our application to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Community Grant Scheme for our Finding a Foothold project.

This six-month initiative focused on building confidence, life skills and transferable employability skills among adults with learning disabilities, autism, additional needs and complex multiple disabilities. The project provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the skills-based approach that has long been embedded in our work, while also creating new opportunities for participants to engage directly with the public and develop practical experience.



Activities included:

- Charity Vinted Shop Project: Service users organised, cleaned, photographed and packaged used clothing for online sale.
- Royton Market Stall: Provided both a fundraising opportunity and hands-on employability experience for participants.
- Pop-Up Charity Shop: Operated at Rhodes Bank Chambers for two months, offering a safe, structured retail environment while drawing public interest and increasing footfall.
- Community Engagements: Collaboration with organisations such as the Clarendon Shopping Centre in Hyde, where service users managed an information stall, as well as similar opportunities in prominent areas of high public footfall across Oldham and Tameside.

These experiences offered confidence-building, skill application and real-world engagement opportunities that were invaluable for participants' personal and vocational development.

Looking ahead, we plan to continue focusing on short-term, project-based grants that support initiatives of this kind, using them to rebuild stability following the conclusion of larger, long-term funding streams.

End of Long-Term Core Funding Support

Another major transition during 2024 was the conclusion of our three-year funding agreement with the Tudor Trust. We received the final £20,000 instalment of a £60,000 commitment toward utilities and core running costs at Rhodes Bank Chambers.

This funding has been essential in covering the high costs associated with electricity, heating, lighting, telecoms, water and insurance. However, the Tudor Trust has since shifted its strategic priorities toward addressing racial injustice, meaning it will no longer provide funding to disability-focused organisations.

This development serves as an important reminder of the need to avoid over-reliance on any single funding source and to remain responsive to the evolving priorities of grant-makers within the wider charitable landscape.

Ongoing Project-Based Grant Success

Our partnership with Action Together, the local VCSE infrastructure organisation for Oldham and Tameside, has continued to be a valuable source of information and support in identifying and applying for local grant opportunities.

Through this partnership, we were delighted to receive a £10,000 grant from the One Oldham Fund in support of our Mondays Matter project. This funding safeguarded the delivery of a range of health and wellbeing-focused activities throughout the year, including Health Club, Dancercise and Walk or Wheel Club. Without this support, it would not have been possible to continue these activities at the same level of quality and consistency.

This project exemplifies the benefits of targeted support for targeted outcomes, enabling us to measure impact clearly and demonstrate to funders how their investment directly benefits vulnerable adults with disabilities in our local community.



Smaller But Significant

In addition to larger project grants, we are deeply grateful for several smaller grants received during 2024, each of which made a tangible impact:

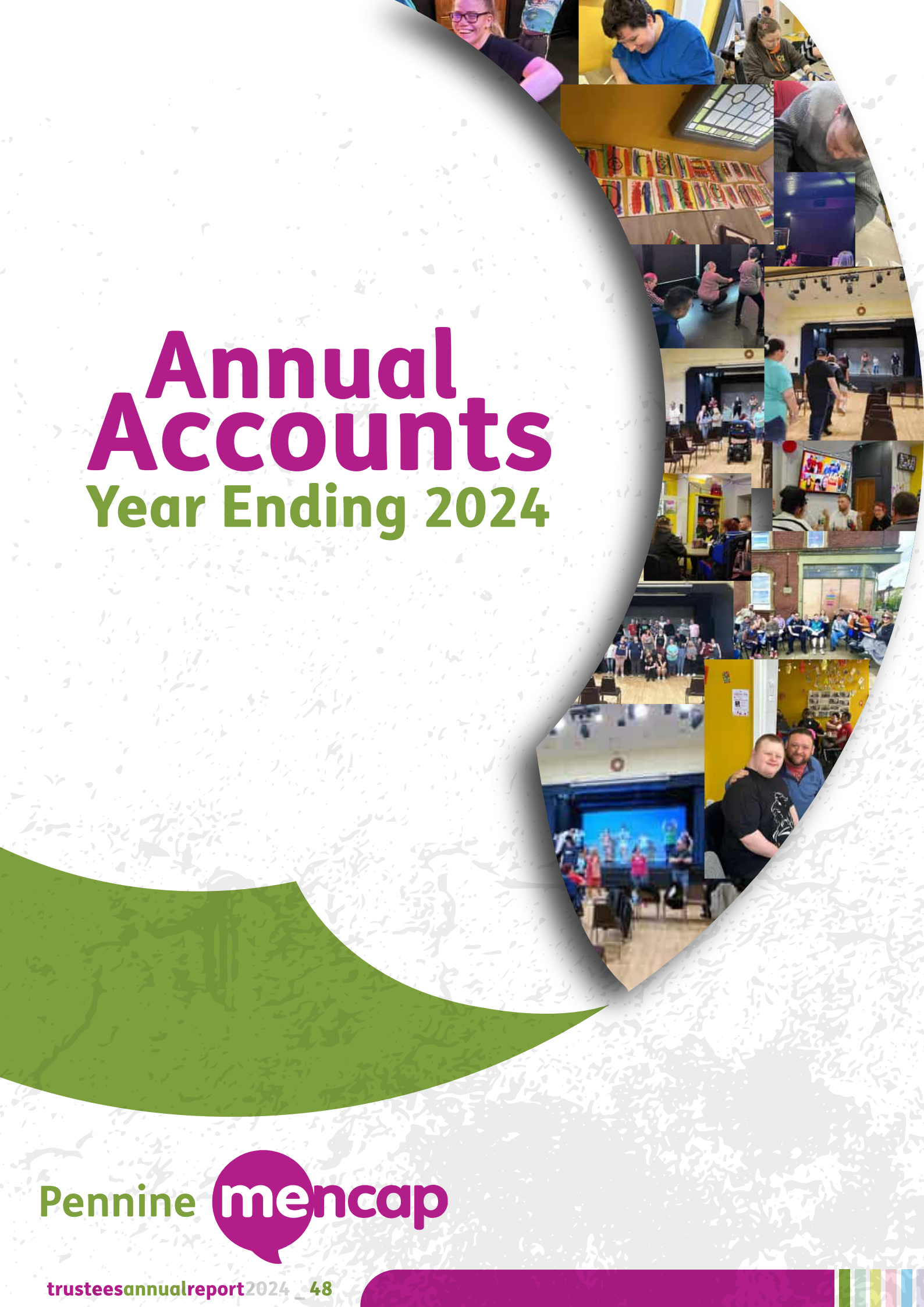


- Manchester Guardian Society – £1,000: Initiated the replacement of fire doors and frames throughout Rhodes Bank Chambers with more compliant, modern models as recommended in our recent Fire Risk Assessment
- Neighbourly Foundation – £500: Supported the purchase of key resources for our health and wellbeing projects.
- Hubbub Foundation – £1,000: Contributed to the continued development and operation of the Pennine Mencap Community Fridge.
- Volunteer Celebration Fund – £499.96: Funded the purchase of two 6m x 3m bright pink gazebos from Gala Tents Ltd, significantly improving our capacity to engage the public at community events and volunteer fairs.



While modest in financial value, these smaller grants have been transformational in supporting specific purchases or works that might otherwise have been overlooked within larger funding bids. They demonstrate how even small-scale investments can produce outsized benefits for our organisation and the people we support.





Annual Accounts

Year Ending 2024

PENNINE MENCAP CHARITY INFORMATION

Directors E G Sparks (Trustee)
A P Stock (Trustee)
N Jotham (Trustee)
J Guy (Trustee) Resigned 17 July 2025
Shaun Fletcher (Trustee)

Company/Charity Number 08055950 / 1150285

Registered Office RHODESBANK CHAMBERS
184-188 UNION STREET
OLDHAM
OL1 1EN
ENGLAND

Accountants Tarpon Limited
132-134 Great Ancoats Street
Manchester
M4 6DE

Company Registration No. 08055950 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity No. 1150285

We report on the accounts of Pennine Mencap for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 6 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is required.

Having satisfied ourselves that the charity is not subject to audit under any company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is our responsibility to:

- a) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- b) to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- c) to state whether particular matters have come to our attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention:

1. which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by charities have not been met; or
2. to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Tarpon Limited

132-134 Great Ancoats Street
Manchester
M4 6DE

15 September 2025

**PENNINE MENCAP INCOME
STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Voluntary income & investment income	84,510	164,410	248,920	309,323
Direct costs	-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources	84,510	164,410	248,920	309,323
Administrative expenses	(84,510)	(239,278)	(323,788)	(359,847)
Other operating income	-	9,551	9,551	6,990
Operating (loss)/surplus	-	(65,317)	(65,317)	(43,534)
Net surplus	-	(65,317)	(65,317)	(43,534)
Other adjustments	-	-	-	-
Total (loss)/surplus	-	(65,317)	(65,317)	(43,534)

**PENNINE MENCAP STATEMENT OF
FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	497,122	503,515
Current assets			
Debtors	5	134,689	138,545
Cash at bank and in hand		17,055	100,877
		<u>151,744</u>	<u>239,422</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	(7,785)	(485)
Net current assets		<u>143,959</u>	<u>238,937</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		641,081	742,452
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	7	(120,946)	(157,000)
Net assets		<u>520,135</u>	<u>585,452</u>
Funds			
Revaluation reserve		400,000	400,000
Unrestricted funds		120,135	185,452
Total funds		<u>520,135</u>	<u>585,452</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2024. The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to the financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008). Approved by the Board of Trustees on 15 September 2025.

E G Sparks (Trustee)

Company Registration No. 08055950

Registered Charity No. 1150285

PENNINE MENCAP
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Restricted funds

The following grants were received during the year ended 31 December 2024 for the following purposes:

Funder	Purpose				Total £
	Capital	Overheads	Project Work	Staffing	
The Manchester Guardian Society	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Greater Manchester Combined Authority Community Grants Scheme	-	-	-	16,494	16,494
Action Together Active Travel Grants	-	-	1,000	-	1,000
National Lottery Community Fund Main Grants Scheme	11,026	-	-	-	11,026
Greater Manchester Combined Authority Community Grants Scheme	-	-	-	21,992	21,992
The Tudor Trust	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Action Together Volunteer Celebration Fund	500	-	-	-	500
The Neighbourly Foundation	-	-	500	-	500
Hubbub Foundation	-	-	1,000	-	1,000
Action Together Cost of Living Crisis Support Grants	-	-	-	998	998
Action Together One Oldham Fund	-	-	-	10,000	10,000

2 Statutory information

PENNINE MENCAP is a charity with the registration number 1150285. The registered office is RHODES BANK CHAMBERS, 184-188 UNION STREET, OLDHAM, OL1 1EN, ENGLAND.

3 Compliance with accounting standards

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A Small Entities. There were no material departures from that standard.

4 Accounting policies

These financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 and comply with FRS 102 Section 1A Small Entities.

Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets.

Presentation currency

The accounts are presented in £ sterling.

PENNINE MENCAP
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

5 Tangible fixed assets

	Land & buildings	Plant & machinery	Total
	£	£	£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2024	411,661.	135,779	547,440
Additions	-	12,613	12,613
At 31 December 2024	411,661	148,392	560,053
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2024	-	43,925	43,925
Charge for the year	-	19,006	19,006
At 31 December 2024	-	62,931	62,931
Net book value			
At 31 December 2024	411,661	85,461	497,122
At 31 December 2023	411,661	91,854	503,515

6 Debtors

	2023	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Amounts due from group undertakings etc	109,192	109,192
Other debtors	25,497	29,353
	134,689	138,545

The debtor of £109,192 represents a loan made to the related entity Pennine Mencap Supported Housing Ltd.

7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	60	60
Accruals	425	425
	485	485

8 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loans	157,000	157,000

9 Average number of employees

During the year the average number of employees was 2 (2022: 2).

PENNINE MENCAP
DETAILED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Incoming resources		
Charitable grants	84,510	173,774
Donations	106,252	45,883
Sales	48,059	17,469
Insurance claim	-	46,640
Rental income	10,099	25,557
	248,920	309,323
Cost of sales		
Other direct costs	-	-
	248,920	309,323
Gross surplus		
Administrative expenses		
Wages and salaries	128,142	91,953
Pensions	3,045	4,094
Local projects	39,982	42,761
Staff training and welfare	396	686
Travel and subsistence	736	1,942
Rent	2,535	4,270
Rates	4,061	473
Light and heat	54,392	25,148
Cleaning	1,004	246
Telephone and fax	2,328	3,415
Postage	-	64
Stationery and printing	93	9
Subscriptions	324	590
Bank charges	139	34
Insurance	3,676	10,433
Software	12,807	8,160
Repairs and maintenance	47,356	133,460
Depreciation	19,006	19,006
Sundry expenses	1,573	1,038
Accountancy fees	675	575
Consultancy fees	-	-
Advertising and PR	158	94
Other legal and professional	1,360	11,396
	323,788	359,847
Other operating income		
Other operating income	9,551	6,990
Operating (loss)/surplus	(65,317)	(43,534)
Total (Loss)/surplus	(65,317)	(43,534)



Events Gallery

Valentines Disco - February 23rd



Holiday to Caernarfon - March 8th



Pennine Mencap 12th Birthday Party
March 22nd



Comedy Fundraiser Night - April 6th



First PMAP Meeting - April 10th



Camberwell Park School Visit
July 13th



Oldham Pride - July 20th



Dr Kershaws Summer Fair - July 21st



American Diner Night - July 26th



Stage Right Presents: A Night at the Musicals - June 28th



Trip to Blackpool - August 15th



**Pennine Mencap Summer Festival
August 17th**



**Strictly Come Dancing Night
September 27th**



**Caritas Hate Crime Awareness Day
September 28th**



**Mystery Tour of Chester
September 30th**



Launch of ShowAbility - October 2nd



A Night at the Movies Choir Event
October 10th



Greater Manchester Change Conference - November 28th



Celebration Ball - November 30th



Pensioners Party - December 8th



Pennine Mencap Christmas Dinner
December 11th



Music Therapy Band Extravaganza
December 12th



Tameside Hospital Christmas Performance
December 13th

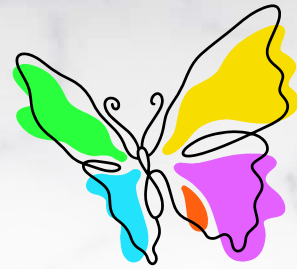


Piper Hill School Visit - December 17th





In lasting memory of
Paula Medley



A pure and joyful soul who we lost in 2024

