



Down's Syndrome
Manchester
Thrive with us

Trustees' Annual Report: 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025

What will this report tell you?



About the charity



How the charity has
spent its money this year

About the charity



Charity Name: Down's Syndrome Manchester (DSM)

Charity Number 1164570

Address: Unit 17, 41 Old Birley Street, Manchester, M15 5RF

How DSM is run:



DSM is a charity.

We must follow charity rules.

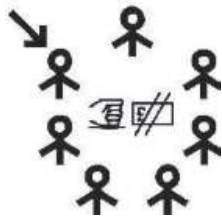
Trustees run the charity.

Trustees are chosen at Annual General Meeting or by other Trustees at other times of the year.

Trustees have to be honest and reliable people.



Our Trustees:



Rick Cowgill
Chair



Steve Ashton
Secretary



Jitka Cowgill
Treasurer



Lydia Burke



Clare Hillyer



Tina Kirwin-McGinley



Sean Farrington



Charlotte Todd



Catherine Harriss



Vacancy

DSM would like a Trustee with Down's syndrome.

Employees:



The DSM Team



Esther Whitaker
CEO
Started in May
2022



Claire Reynolds
Events & Volunteer
Manager
Started in Sept 2023,
left in May 2025



Kayleigh Haworth
Admin & Finance
Assistant
Started in July
2023



Amy Town
Fundraising Manager
Started in April 2025



Suzi Lindsay
Family Support Worker
Started in June 2025



Susan Macdonald
Programme Manager
Started in July 2025



Emma Goswell
Programme Manager
Started in July 2025

Employees: WorkFit Co-ordinators



John Henry
(Maternity Cover)



Lucy Dyson
(On Maternity Leave)

Speech and Language Therapists



Adelisa Yon
(Pre-school and cover)



Alison Calow



Helen Adkins



Judith Patel
(Last conversation group in June 2025, continuing ad hoc support)



Rachel Stevens
(Started in September 2024,
went on maternity leave in April)



Jen Chan
(Started in September 2024)



Rhoda Badge
(Started in September 2024)

Occupational Therapist



Anita Bartlett

Makaton Tutor



Jen Ellison

What does DSM do?

Our vision is an inclusive world, where every person with Down's syndrome is visible, supported and celebrated

We help individuals with Down's syndrome and their families to thrive through emotional and practical support, education and a warm welcome. Because we believe everyone deserves to be included.



What kind of charity is DSM?



- We respect everyone
- We work together
- We are ambitious
- We are caring
- We are positive

What does the Treasurer say?



- The increase shows we were successful in fundraising and new ideas this has helped us reach more families.
- We are strong because we have more spare money called reserves.
- Overall the progress shows we are making good financial decisions and also how hard everyone is working to support our mission.

Financial Overview

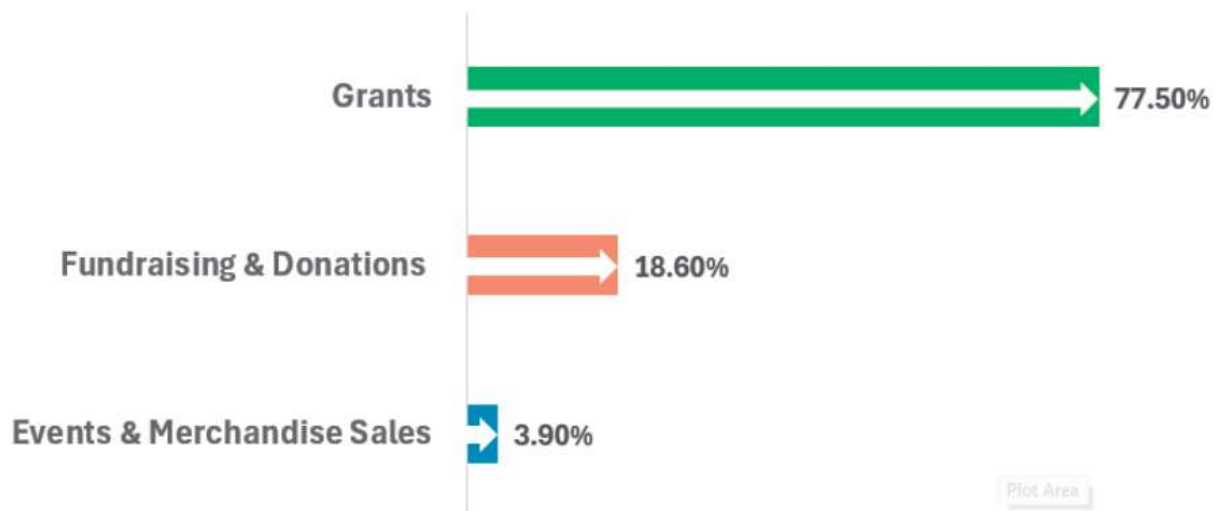


Money in:
£187,651

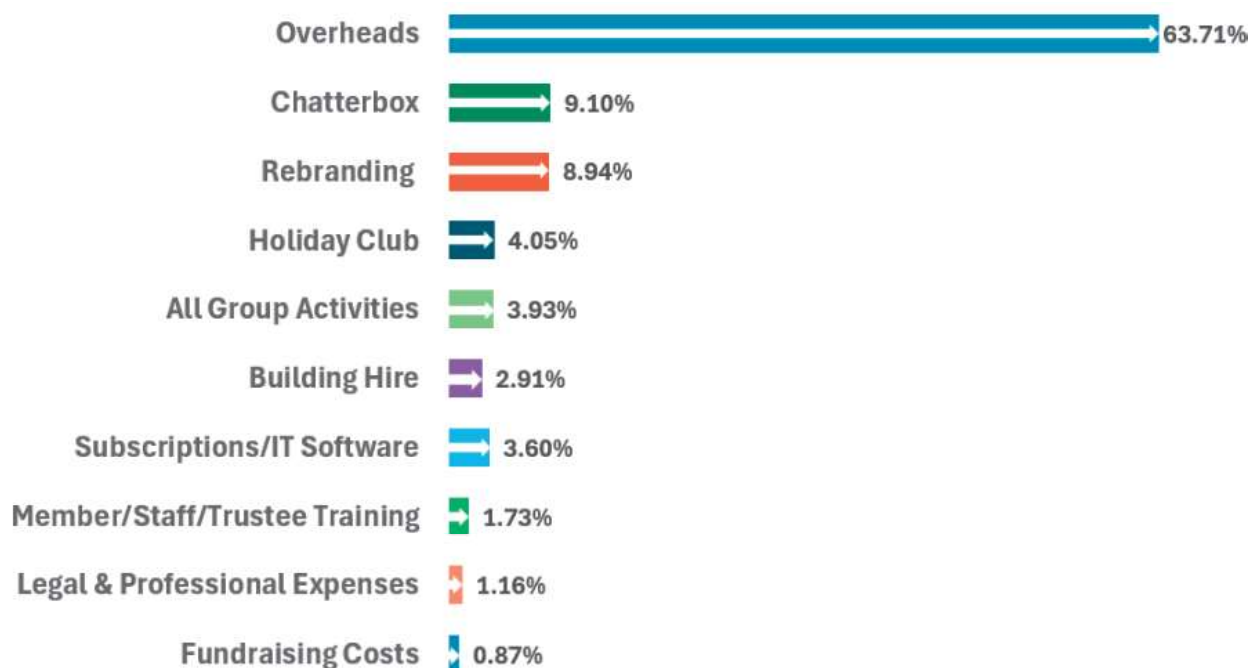
Money spent:*
£163,240

*Figures subject to slight adjustments as the accounts are finalised

Where the Charity's money has come from this year



How the Charity has spent its money this year



Overheads is a word we use to describe the costs of running the charity

What does the Chair of Trustees say?



- Rick is proud of DSM and its members
- Rick is thankful to the DSM team (Trustees and Staff) for all the hard work
- Our success is thanks to our members, trustees, staff, and volunteers.
- This year has been a really good year for our charity
- We have grown stronger and made big plans for the future.
- Helped more people and made a bigger difference.
- Change

We are looking for an experienced Chair to help the charity grow, when we find the best person I am going to stop being a Trustee

- Looking Back with Pride

I feel very proud of what we have achieved together.

I know our community is strong.

It has been amazing to be your Trustee and Chair during this exciting time.

I look forward to seeing the charity continue to grow, create new ideas, and make a lasting difference.

What does the Chair of Trustees say?



- This year showed strong financial growth and stability.
- Income and spending both increased by about 25%, matching our goals for steady, sustainable growth.
- The increase reflects successful fundraising and new initiatives that helped us reach more families.
- We strengthened our financial security by increasing our reserves.
- This helps us manage a larger budget and meet future commitments confidently.
- Overall, the progress shows strong financial management and the dedication of everyone supporting our mission.
- Together, we've built a solid foundation for even greater impact in the future.

What does the CEO say?



- Esther has loved seeing members thrive
- Esther is excited to see the learning for life project continue to develop
- Holiday club was amazing!
- The socials have been fun and important for members

Members



DSM has more than 400 members

Members can:

- Vote at charity meetings
- Become Trustees
- Attend DSM events and training



How we communicate with our members



Email newsletter
each month



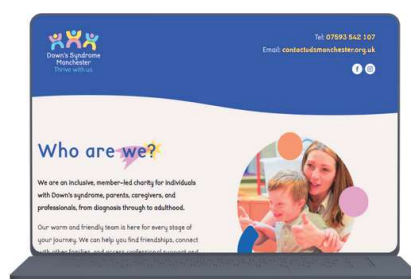
Social media



Email



WhatsApp



Our website – www.dsmanchester.org.uk

Important things that have happened this year



Chatterbox



Preschool



10 – 16s Socials



Over 17s Socials



Singing Hands



Training



Project Smile



Parent Socials



Speak Up User Group



Volunteer Programme



Holiday Club



DSM Dad's Football Team

New things that have happened this year



**Re-brand:
We became Down's
Syndrome Manchester**

New logo and identity



Family Support Worker

Learnand**Thrive**



Learn and Thrive: Lessons for Life Sessions



5 – 9s Socials

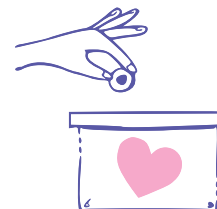


4 new members of staff

Friends, Funders, and Supporters we have worked with this year



Friends, Funders, and Supporters we have worked with this year



Our members who have raised money or donated



Plans for the future

We will try to:



1. Make sure everyone in Greater Manchester knows about us



2. Make sure the Charity is stable



3. Provide some childcare

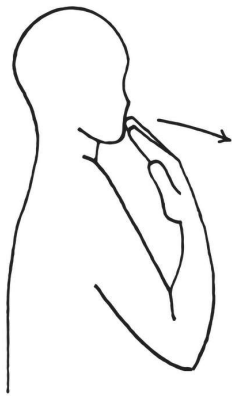


4. Offer events for everyone

We would like feedback from our members on our plans

Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to thank staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication.



Glossary – what some words mean

Admin & Finance Assistant

An employee who helps with administration and looking after the charity's money.

Annual General Meeting

A meeting of Trustees and members that happens once a year.

CEO

The person responsible for running the charity.

Chair

The leader of the Trustees

Charity

An organisation set up to provide help and support to a particular group of people.

Employee

Someone who works for the charity.

Events & Volunteer Manager

An employee who organises events and looks after the volunteers.

Secretary

The Trustee responsible for keeping charity records.

Treasurer

The Trustee who looks after the charity's money.

Trustees

The people responsible for making decisions about the charity and ensuring it is meeting the needs of its members.

WorkFit

A programme helping people with Down's syndrome find jobs.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved this Trustees' report.

Signed on their behalf

Signed: R.Cowgill

Full name: Rick Cowgill

Position: Chair of trustees

Date: 23.10.2025



Chair's Statement

We hope you've enjoyed reading this this new format report. The following pages contain some additional information for those who would like to get to know our charity in just a little more detail.

This year has been one of remarkable progress for our charity — a year defined by growth, stability, and bold strategic development. Together, we have strengthened our foundations, extended our impact, and set a clear and confident course for the future. As a proud member-led organisation, our achievements are a true reflection of the passion, dedication, and collective spirit of our members, trustees, staff, and volunteers, whose commitment continues to inspire and drive everything we do.

This year, I made the difficult decision to step down as a trustee, work is now underway to appoint a new and experienced Chair who will help guide the charity into its next exciting chapter. As I prepare to hand over this role, I do so with immense pride in all that we have achieved together, and with deep confidence in the strength, vision, and resilience of our incredible community. It has been both an honour and a joy to serve as Trustee and Chair during such a transformative period, and I look forward to watching the charity continue to thrive, innovate, and make a lasting difference in the years ahead.

The Charity

We are an inclusive, member-led charity for individuals with Down's syndrome, parents, caregivers, and professionals, from diagnosis through to adulthood.

We are an Association CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) established on 26 August 2015 and previously known as South Manchester Down's Syndrome Support Group.

Charity number 1164570



Financial Review

This year has been another outstanding period of positive financial growth and strengthened stability. Both income and expenditure rose by around 25%, aligning with our strategic goals for sustainable expansion and greater impact. This growth reflects the success of our fundraising efforts and initiatives, enabling us to reach and support even more families across the region.

We've also strengthened our financial resilience by increasing our reserves, ensuring the charity remains well-equipped to manage a growing budget and meet ongoing commitments with confidence.

Overall, this year's financial progress reflects not only strong stewardship but also the collective dedication of everyone who believes in our mission. Together, we've built a strong foundation for even greater impact in the years ahead.

Impact / Key Achievements

- **Chatterbox**

9 events, one cancelled due to extreme weather conditions

- **Preschool group**

2 sessions monthly with visits from Speech & Language Therapist and – Occupational Therapist

- **Social events for all ages**

3x 5–9 year olds (this was new this year)

7 x 10–16 year olds

11 x Over 17 year olds

1 x Over 25 year olds

- **Annual World Down Syndrome Day Celebration concert with Singing Hands**

180 attendees

- **Training**

We offered 10 training sessions including:

Literacy

Behaviour

Post-16 Options

Wills & Trusts

Ensuring your EHCP is fit for purpose



Key Achievements continued...

- **Dad's football team**

Played twice a month

- **WorkFit**

23 candidates

8 active jobs including roles at The Lowry, Greene King and Brewdog

- **Project Smile**

A project in Jeffrey's memory to make sure people with Down's syndrome in all communities get the right support – we held two outreach sessions

- **Parent socials**

3 x parents / carer social events

- **User-group**

Speak Up had 10 sessions and covered member led topics including travel, holidays and health

- **Held our yearly volunteer thank you event**

- **Holiday Club**

4th – 8th August 2025

Number of children attending: 18

Age range: 5–15

- **4 new members of staff**

1 x Fundraising Manager

2 x Programme Managers (job share)

1 x Family Support Worker

- **Started a pilot of Learn & Thrive**

Lessons for Life sessions carried out with members

www.dsmanchester.org.uk



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Down's Syndrome Manchester

On accounts for the year ended

31 August 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1164570

Set out on pages

1 and 2 of form CC16a

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/08/2025**.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: A J Pickford

Date: 12/04/26

Name: A J Pickford

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

ICAEW

Address: 5 Cedar Avenue

Altrincham
WA14 2QR

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

01/09/2024

To

31/08/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted to the nearest £	Endowment to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Bank interest					-
Fundraising events	4,872			4,872	3,237
Donations and grants (incl. gift aid)	43,438	57,810		101,248	96,594
Fees for charitable services	6,799			6,799	3,720
Fees for training courses	25			25	-
the National Lottery Community Fund "RC North West Region"		74,283		74,283	49,401
Members' subscriptions				-	-
Sales of merchandise	424			424	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	55,558	132,093		187,651	152,951

A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	55,558	132,093		187,651	152,951

A3 Payments					
Arts and crafts supplies	117	1,033		1,151	848
Bank charges				-	-
Building hire	3,579	2,306		5,884	4,653
Christmas activities	553	200		753	296
Equipment cost	151	1,162		1,313	
Fundraising costs	1,334	44		1,378	730
Group activities	4,534	12,484		17,019	10,683
Insurance	100			100	100
IT & software & consumables	2,134	3,302		5,436	3,248
Misc expenses incl travel	1,362	726		2,088	235
Pre-school group				-	870
Legal & Professional costs	2,320			2,320	1,103
Refreshments (meetings and Chatterbox)	676	419		1,095	661
Rent, rates and utilities	2,115	15		2,130	1,770
Rebranding	6,707	7,457		14,165	3,932
Resources				-	32
Sing and sign	128	912		1,040	1,170
Speech and language therapists	1,334	8,251		9,585	6,800
Staffing	6,287	25,646		31,933	41,609
Stationery, Printing & postage costs	16	136		152	130
Subscriptions	349	140		489	867
the National Lottery Community Fund "RC North West Region"		61,159		61,159	48,667
Training	1,933	812		2,745	3,346
Transaction charges	710			710	189
Yoga	40	200		240	280
Volunteer expenses	143	214		357	331
Sub total	36,621	126,619		163,240	132,549

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Deposit for Office	-	-	-	-	-
Learning resources	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	36,621	126,619	-	163,240	132,549

Net of receipts/(payments)	18,937	5,474		24,411	20,402
A5 Transfers between funds		-		-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	45,130	54,473		99,603	79,201
Cash funds this year end	64,067	59,947		124,014	99,603

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted to nearest £	Endowment to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current account	64,067	59,947	-
	Cash in hand			-
				-
	Total cash funds	64,067	59,947	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details		-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which	Amount due	When due
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of	Signature	Print Name	Date of	
		Jitka Cowgill	12/11/2025	