

CONNECTIONS GROUP EXETER

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Aim and Purpose

To promote social inclusion for the public benefit and relieve the needs of people in Exeter (and the surrounding area), who require Health and Social Care services. We do this by providing access to community and leisure facilities with the aim of relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society. Socially excluded means being excluded from society or parts of society as a result of experiencing serious and enduring mental health problems.

Objectives and Activities

To reduce social isolation and improve quality of life, by enabling our members access to community facilities for leisure and social reasons. To include the following:

- One to One work, that breaks down barriers that might prevent participation.
- Activities that include walks, ten pin bowling, meals out, coach trips, quizzes and visiting the local area.

How our activities deliver public benefit

All our charitable activities focus on our objective to promote social inclusion for those people that experience serious and enduring mental health problems. The work that we undertake furthers our charitable purposes and in doing so the Trustees have paid special regard to the Charity Commission statement on public benefit.

Achievements and Performance

Despite it being a difficult year, because of the Covid-19 Pandemic, Connections has continued to be available for its members, many of them have a severe and enduring mental illness. Our facilitator has critical worker status, and this has meant that he could travel and meet those most affected by the various lockdowns.

The rules and regulations at the beginning of the first lockdown, with regards why you could leave your house, weren't clear enough for our members. Our facilitator found guidance, that stated those with mental illnesses were more likely to suffer from isolation. This guidance, therefore, made it possible for those suffering from a mental illness to leave their house more frequently. This made a huge difference to those anxious and isolated people. The facilitator gave a copy of the relevant guidance to all members, to be taken with them when they left the house.

During the past financial year Connections has been in receipt of Covid-19 Response grants from Exeter City Council and Devon County Council, which we are very grateful for. We were successful in another bid to the Big Lottery Fund and continue to receive our core funding from the Devon Partnership Trust. We also secured a grant from the Allen Lane Foundation, to undertake a specific task to enhance the life of a very vulnerable person.

It is very heartening to the ethos of Connections' aims, that we receive these grants to enable us to undertake a wide range of different ways to assist vulnerable people.

The past year has without doubt, been very challenging for those continuing to provide mental health services. Not only trying to adhere to the regulations, but also help to reduce isolation and strive to improve the quality of life. This means that the people who use Connections' services, can continue to enjoy the events that are put on.

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Financial Review

Total receipts for the year to 31 March 2021 amounted to £36,052 (year ended 31 March 2020 £19,074).

Total payments for the year to 31 March 2021 amounted to £26,458 (year ended 31 March 2020 £21,339).

The charity holds £13,973 in their bank account.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees agree that the level of reserves to be held should be 2 months expenses, to include the facilitators salary.

Risk Management Policy

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations and finances of the Charity and are satisfied that there are systems in place to mitigate their exposure to major risks.

Plans for Future Periods

We, like many others, are still feeling the impact of Covid-19.

Despite this, Connections is continuing to provide the means for its members to reduce their isolation by nearly operating a full service of activities, whilst adhering to social distancing and other Covid-19 restrictions.

As restrictions are eased, we will look at re-instating those events that had to be cancelled throughout the pandemic.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity's objects and regulations are set out in the charity's Memorandum and Articles, which were first agreed in January 2018. The charity is an unincorporated charitable organisation.

The method of identifying and appointing trustees is through recommendations by Connections' members. The Connections Group Exeter newsletter is also sent to care managers in the mental health team. This leads to potential trustees being found and invited to stand.

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Reference and Administration Details

Registered Charity Number: 1176763

Elected Members:	A Clewes	-	Chairman
	Miss S Hall	-	Deputy Chair
	Miss J Curnow	-	Secretary
	B Warren	-	Treasurer
	M Gardner	-	Trustee

Administrator: B Warren

Bankers: Natwest Bank, 59 High Street, Exeter, EX4 3DL

Address: 19 Fairpark Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4HL

Independent Examiner
G M Corby BSc FCA
Merlin Accountancy Services Ltd
2nd Floor, 33 Longbrook Street, Exeter,
Devon, EX4 6AW

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RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	31 March 2021		31 March 2020	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Grant		36,052		15,289
Christmas Draw		-		40
Subscriptions		-		245
Loan		-		3,500
		<u>36,052</u>		<u>19,074</u>
Payments				
Refreshments	2,414		1,483	
Telephone	880		678	
Post and Stationery	2,145		1,756	
Travelling	3,422		2,894	
Admissions	-		616	
Room Hire/Storage	90		443	
Rent	480		480	
Administrator	11,050		10,800	
Accountancy	549		536	
Insurance	312		309	
Advertising	-		982	
Miscellaneous Expenses	1,616		362	
Loan Repayment	3,500		-	
		<u>26,458</u>		<u>21,339</u>
NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS		<u>9,594</u>		<u>(2,265)</u>
Cash Funds at 01 April 2020		<u>5,405</u>		<u>7,670</u>
Cash Funds at 31 March 2021		<u>14,999</u>		<u>5,405</u>

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STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES 31 MARCH 2021

	31 March 2021		31 March 2020	
	£	£	£	£
ASSETS RETAINED FOR OWN USE				
Computer	510		510	
Office Furniture	-		296	
Printer	158		158	
		<u>668</u>		<u>964</u>
CASH FUNDS				
Bank Current Account	13,973		3,546	
Cash Held by Administrator	1,026		1,859	
		<u>14,999</u>		<u>5,405</u>
LIABILITIES				
Loan	-		3,500	
Accruals	576		549	
		<u>576</u>		<u>4,049</u>

The members declare that they approve the financial statements and confirm that they have made available all relevant records and information for their preparation.

Signed on behalf of the members

Sybil Hall VICE CHAIR

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A Clewes - Chairman

20 / 09 / 2021

Date:

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
CONNECTIONS GROUP EXETER

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021 which are set out on pages 3 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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 needed. I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- 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
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My 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 the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to these matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act; or
2. to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

G M Corby BSc FCA
Merlin Accountancy Services Ltd
2nd Floor
33 Longbrook Street
Exeter
EX4 6AW

Signed: 

Date: 29/9/21