

## **MENWALKTALK TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Year Ending 31 December 2024

Registered Charity No. 1188361

Trustees	Mr Tom Acott (Chair) Mr James Abdool (Vice Chair) Mr Michael Jenkins (Treasurer) Mr Taylor Pryer-Freeman Mr Rodney Funnell Ms Zoe Fortune (resigned 13 January 2025) Mr Jake Harber (resigned 10 April 2024)
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Registered office	Wickbourne Centre Clun Road Littlehampton West Sussex BN17 7DZ
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Independent examiner	Verdant Accountants Limited Chartered Certified Accountants 20-22 Wenlock Road London N1 7GU
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## **CEO Statement**

2024 has been a year of steady growth, renewed focus and deepened impact for MenWalkTalk. As we approach five years since our first ever walk, I've taken time to reflect on how far we've come – not just in numbers of walks, but in the lives we've touched.

This year, we've seen more men than ever join our walks. For many, it was their first step towards connection, conversation and community. Our incredible team of volunteer walk leaders and campaigners – many of whom have their own lived experience of mental health struggles – have continued to show up with empathy, consistency and care.

Behind the scenes, we've strengthened our foundations. We began laying the groundwork for a clearer operating model, introduced more structure to how we support and train volunteers, and welcomed a Fundraising Officer to help us secure the vital income needed to grow responsibly. We've also started important conversations about our leadership structure, ensuring we stay sustainable and focused on our mission as we evolve.

Our presence in local communities has grown thanks to partnerships, campaign work and increased engagement online. Through stories, statistics and shared experiences, we've raised awareness of how social isolation impacts men – and how simple, peer-led walks can be a powerful tool for change.

MenWalkTalk remains rooted in the belief that no man should feel he has to struggle alone. As we head into 2025, our vision remains clear: To build communities of peer support that make a positive impact on the wellbeing of men, through the power of walking and talking together.

Thank you to our supporters, volunteers, funders and trustees. Your trust in us makes this work possible.

**Matt Pollard**

CEO & Founder

## About MenWalkTalk

MenWalkTalk is a UK charity supporting men's mental health through peer-led walking groups that combine conversation, connection and community. Founded in January 2020 by Matt Pollard following his own struggles with work-related stress, MenWalkTalk began with a simple idea: that walking side by side could break down the barriers that stop men from speaking openly about how they feel.

One man's journey has now grown into a movement. Today, MenWalkTalk hosts regular walks across the UK, creating safe and welcoming spaces for men of all backgrounds to come together – not for therapy or treatment, but for time out, fresh air, and honest conversation.

For many, a MenWalkTalk walk is the first time they've felt able to open up. One participant described it as "the only space I've found where I don't have to pretend I'm OK." Another said, "This walk saved my life – it gave me hope, and people who understood." These stories are echoed again and again across our network.

Our trained walk-leaders – all volunteers, many with lived experience of mental health struggles – are the heart of our model. They help create an informal but supportive environment where no one is pressured to talk, but everyone knows they can. We prioritise consistency and safety, offering structure through onboarding, safeguarding training, and regular check-ins with our volunteers.

By the end of 2024, MenWalkTalk had supported over 200 men through in-person walks, while also building a strong digital community through our WhatsApp groups, Facebook Groups, and bi-monthly Zoom socials. These platforms ensure continued access to peer support between walks – especially important for men who live in isolated areas or face social anxiety.

MenWalkTalk doesn't aim to replace clinical services. Instead, we meet men where they are – often before they reach crisis – and walk with them towards connection, understanding, and wellbeing. We believe that offering simple, stigma-free ways to talk can make a powerful difference. And we know from experience that it does.

## Overview and Achievements in 2024

2024 was a year of reflection, consolidation and strategic growth for MenWalkTalk. As we neared our fifth anniversary, we focused not only on reaching more men but on ensuring that our support remained consistent, safe, and meaningful across every walk and platform.

Key achievements included:

- **Project worker role** – We were able to employ a part-time project worker with the specific goals of increasing volunteer recruitment, improving the onboarding process, strengthening the relationship with our volunteers, and building partnerships with other organisations.
- **Strengthening Volunteer Infrastructure:** We introduced structured onboarding and clearer role definitions for volunteer walk-leaders and campaigners.
- **Walk Expansion & Local Impact:** We continued to grow our walk network with new groups launching in areas such as Devon, Battersea and Sheffield, ending the year with 20 walks meeting on a regular basis. Several established walks also reported increased attendance, reflecting growing awareness and trust in the MenWalkTalk model.
- **University Project** – Following a direct request from the University of Sheffield, we helped facilitate an on-campus walking group to provide additional support for their staff and students. We also had many conversations with other Universities to explore how they can engage their students in support through our walks, or by providing volunteer opportunities with us to explore on-site campus walks.
- **Queen Alexandra Hospital** – We were invited to attend and lead a walk at the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Plymouth as part of their Men's Health Week promotion. This has led to an ongoing relationship with the hospital, as well as plans by The Men's Forum at QAH to establish a MWT walking group to support the male workforce.
- **Fundraising Development:** With the addition of a Fundraising Officer, we began to secure more income through grants, community partnerships and targeted donor engagement. This investment in sustainability helped lay the groundwork for future capacity-building.
- **Storytelling and Awareness:** Throughout the year, we amplified the voices of men who walk with us – sharing testimonials and lived experiences through social media and local campaigns. These powerful stories continued to challenge stigma and highlight the difference a simple walk can make.
- **Operational Foundations:** We began shaping a long-term operating model, reviewing internal roles, and exploring new leadership structures to support the charity's next phase. Discussions included introducing a Charity Manager role reflect our commitment to long-term sustainability.

## Devon Project – Success in 2024

One of our standout developments in 2024 was the launch and success of the **MenWalkTalk Devon Project**, which was made possible by the kind support Devon Community Foundation and CLASP.

- **New Walk Locations:** Thanks to the funding, we were able to establish a new regular walk location in Newton Abbot, **with a further 2 walk leaders and locations added to our onboarding process** – each would be led by trained volunteer walk-leaders with lived experience. These walks quickly gained momentum, attracting regular attendees who reported improved mental wellbeing and reduced feelings of isolation.
- **Local Partnerships:** We collaborated with a range of organisations including Livewell Southwest, Talkworks, Devon Mind, Devon Recovery Learning Community, and the Devon Partnership Trust. These partnerships helped embed MenWalkTalk within existing mental health and wellbeing pathways in the region.
- **Community Engagement:** Our launch walks in each location were supported by local NHS teams, and our presence at community events and stakeholder meetings helped raise awareness and build trust in the MenWalkTalk approach. We also engaged local MPs, councillors, and voluntary networks to help spread the word.
- **Volunteer Growth:** We recruited and trained a committed group of walk-leaders across Devon who continue to support the project's growth. Feedback from these volunteers highlighted the personal impact of leading walks, as well as the collective benefits seen within their communities.
- **Legacy Planning:** As we approached the end of the funding period, we focused on ensuring sustainability through ongoing volunteer support, wider community promotion, and grant applications to maintain the walks beyond the initial funding window.

The Devon Project has demonstrated that the MenWalkTalk model can be successfully embedded in new areas with the right support. It's a clear example of how simple, peer-led interventions can make a measurable difference to men's mental health at a local level.

As we closed 2024, MenWalkTalk remained firmly committed to our mission: supporting wellbeing and building communities – one step, and one conversation, at a time.

## Highlights and Progress in 2024

In 2024, MenWalkTalk focused on refining the quality of our offer and deepening our impact in the communities we serve. This was a year marked by intentional improvement, listening to our participants and volunteers, and responding to the growing demand for meaningful, low-barrier mental health support, the result of which saw a 63% increase in the number of walk locations and stronger bonds with our volunteers and communities.

- **Participant Feedback and Impact:** We prioritised listening to those who walk with us. Feedback from participants highlighted that many felt less isolated, more connected, and increasingly confident in opening up about their mental health. This qualitative insight helped shape improvements to how we communicate and support men at every stage of their journey.
- **Strengthening Volunteer Roles:** Walk-leaders and community campaigners continued to be at the heart of MenWalkTalk. We introduced new role descriptions, peer learning opportunities, and check-in systems to help our volunteers feel supported, confident, and valued.
- **Raising Visibility Through Lived Experience:** We saw a rise in men stepping forward to share their stories publicly – through blogs, social media, and events – helping us reach wider audiences and reduce stigma in real, relatable ways. These personal accounts continue to be our most powerful advocacy tool.
- **More Than a Walk:** As the year progressed, our spaces became more than just walks. Men used them to reconnect with nature, return to work, build confidence in group settings, and form friendships that extended beyond the walks themselves. The social value of these connections became increasingly clear.
- **Laying the Groundwork for Scale:** While walk numbers remained steady, we prepared behind the scenes for long-term sustainability. This included exploring organisational structure changes, improving our internal systems, and developing stronger frameworks for local partnerships and business engagement.

As we closed the year, MenWalkTalk was not only continuing to walk and talk — we were listening, learning, and building the kind of community men tell us they wish they'd found sooner.

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**

### **Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Men Walk Talk (Charity no 1188361).**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 8-10.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Charity, 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 Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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:

- (1) In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:
  - a. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
  - b. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.
- (2) I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



**Chaweevan Williams FCCA**  
Chartered Certified Accountant  
Verdant Accountants Limited  
20-22 Wenlock Road  
London N1 7GU

Date: 03 July 2025



## **Financial Review**

The charity received £100,755 in donations, grants and fundraising activities in the year to 31 December 2024 (2023: £52,055) and made payments of £69,181 (2023: £51,677). At 31 December 2024 the charity had £80,414 of cash funds (2023: £48,840).

The charity's policy is that the organisation will retain reserves of at least 4 months' running costs or £25,000 (whichever is the greater). This will be reviewed annually by the Trustees. At 31 December 2024 the charity's cash position met this reserve requirement.

The accounts, prepared on the "receipts and payments" basis, are included overleaf.

## Men Walk talk

### Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
<b>Receipts</b>					
Donations		36,013	0	<b>36,013</b>	41,344
Grants		0	59,894	<b>59,894</b>	10,155
Fundraising		4,848	0	<b>4,848</b>	556
Sub total		40,861	59,894	<b>100,755</b>	52,055
<b>Asset and investment sales</b>					
		0	0	<b>0</b>	0
<b>Total receipts</b>		40,861	59,894	<b>100,755</b>	52,055
<b>Payments</b>					
Payments relating to charitable activities		11,025	2,440	<b>13,465</b>	10,434
Running costs		13,022	321	<b>13,343</b>	6,193
Staff costs		19,289	23,084	<b>42,373</b>	33,900
Sub total		43,336	25,845	<b>69,181</b>	50,527
<b>Asset and investment purchases</b>					
Computer equipment		0	0	<b>0</b>	1,150
<b>Total payments</b>		43,336	25,845	<b>69,181</b>	51,677
<b>Net of receipts / (payments)</b>		(2,475)	34,049	<b>31,574</b>	378
Transfer between funds		0	0	<b>0</b>	0
<b>Cash funds at 31 December 2023 (2022)</b>		41,704	7,136	<b>48,840</b>	48,462
<b>Cash funds at 31 December 2024 (2023)</b>	1b	<b>39,229</b>	<b>41,185</b>	<b>80,414</b>	48,840

## Men Walk talk

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As at 31 December 2024

	Notes	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
<b>Cash funds</b>			
Bank Current - Unrestricted		39,083	41,585
Paypal - Unrestricted		146	119
Bank Current - Restricted		41,185	7,136
<b>Total cash funds</b>		<b>80,414</b>	<b>48,840</b>
<b>Other monetary assets</b>			
Receivable income		0	19
<b>Investment assets</b>		<b>Current Value</b>	<b>Current Value</b>
Investment assets		0	0
		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	1c	607	990
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Independent examination		(660)	(660)
Creditors		(29)	0

Approved by the Trustees on 2 July 2025 and signed on their behalf:



Michael Jenkins – Trustee

Date:

4 July 2025

The notes on page 10 form a part of these financial statements.

# **Men Walk talk**

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 31 December 2024**

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### **1 Accounting policies**

#### **a Basis of preparation**

The basis of accounting is Receipts & Payments.

#### **b Funds accounting**

Funds held by the charity are:

*Unrestricted funds* - general funds which can be used for the charity ordinary purposes.

*Restricted funds* - donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the charity for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given.

#### **c Assets retained for the charity's own use**

Assets retained for the charity's own use in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities are included at net book value.

### **2 Related party transactions**

There were no payments to related parties during the year (2023: £1,320).

## Volunteers and Team

Our volunteers remain the heart of MenWalkTalk – from the walk-leaders who show up rain or shine, to the campaigners and community champions helping us raise awareness across the country. In 2024, we focused on deepening the support and training available to our volunteer team, ensuring they feel equipped, valued and connected.

Our staff team also continued to evolve. With the Fundraising Officer firmly embedded in the organisation, we focused on streamlining internal operations and began scoping the introduction of a Charity Operations Manager role to support the CEO and futureproof the charity's growth. While our core team remains small – including the Founder & CEO, Charity Administrator, and Fundraising Officer – we are working smarter, with clearer systems and better coordination between staff and volunteers.

We are incredibly proud of the commitment and compassion shown by every person who gives their time to MenWalkTalk. Their lived experience, empathy, and belief in the power of conversation continue to shape everything we do.

## Recognition and Thanks

In 2024, MenWalkTalk continued to benefit from the support of individuals, partners, and organisations who share our commitment to improving men's mental health.

We were proud to be part of several key events and campaigns throughout the year:

- We took part in the **Baton of Hope Conference**, continuing our involvement in national conversations around suicide prevention and mental health.
- We partnered with **Mercedes-Benz Vans UK** and **Chris Kamara** on a mental health awareness campaign, helping raise visibility of our work and message across a wider audience.
- We were chosen charity for The Sportsman, Littlehampton who hosted a **charity football club family fun day**, bringing together supporters and participants to raise funds for MenWalkTalk.
- We returned to **Armed Forces Day in Littlehampton** for the third consecutive year, maintaining a consistent presence in our local community, with thanks to Littlehampton Town Council.
- We attended **Brighton Pride**, furthering our commitment to inclusion and reaching more men who may benefit from our offer.
- In November we were invited to speak to staff at local employer GlaxoSmithKline for **International Men's Day**.
- In Littlehampton, where our first walk has continued to meet from, **Mewsbrook Park Cafe** chose to support us throughout the year, as one of their chosen charities.

We also connected with a number of services and networks to build awareness and explore volunteer engagement:

- Attended **VAAC networking events** and a **Mental Health NHS staff lunch** to promote collaboration and visibility.
- Participated in **filming with students in Brighton** to help share our message through new platforms.
- Continued outreach to **local Job Centres**, including in Chichester and Crawley, to promote volunteer opportunities and expand our presence.
- Took part in **Talk & Table community events** to engage directly with local residents and professionals.
- Distributed updated **marketing materials** to key local authorities and partners and through staff efforts across Sussex and beyond.

We are grateful to all individuals, volunteers, fundraisers, and partners who supported MenWalkTalk throughout 2024. Your time, commitment and advocacy help us ensure that men across the UK continue to find connection, support and conversation when they need it most.

## Feedback and Testimonials

### Participant Testimonials:

The voices of our participants are at the heart of MenWalkTalk. Their feedback continues to show just how vital our walks are in helping men feel less isolated, more connected, and supported in their mental health.

*“MenWalkTalk has been a lifeline for me. The walks give me a chance to talk openly about my struggles and connect with others facing similar challenges.”*

*“I didn’t realise how much I needed MenWalkTalk until I joined. I was invited by a friend and now I look forward to it each week. It’s helped me get out, talk about ‘stuff’, and feel human again.”*

*“There’s no pressure to talk – but when you do, the support from others is amazing. Just being around guys who ‘get it’ has made me feel less alone.”*

*“I joined over a year ago after retiring. It’s helped me maintain my listening skills, hear others’ stories, and share when I need to. Conversations start with weather and work – but sometimes go to the heart of things. That balance is powerful.”*

*“I had a tough day recently. I turned up to the walk and got the support I needed – in bucketloads. It couldn’t have come at a better time.”*

*“What I like most is the freedom – no pressure, no expectations. You walk, you talk, or you just listen. And every time, you leave feeling lighter.”*

*“MenWalkTalk gives me structure and connection during difficult weeks. It’s become a trusted part of my mental wellbeing toolkit.”*

*“Excellent charity that provides great support and lifelong friends to men experiencing a difficult time – without putting pressure on anyone to talk.”*

*“It’s not just about talking – it’s about being around like-minded people. The combination of movement, fresh air, and open conversation is like medicine.”*

*“I’ve had some dark days lately, and the encouragement I received to rejoin the group helped me through. I’m now inspired to one day become a walk leader myself.”*

*“It’s a little like a healthy addiction – the more you go, the more you get out of it. I’m thankful for the support it’s given me in my recovery.”*

We are also grateful for the constructive feedback, which helps us grow. Some participants expressed a preference for WhatsApp over Heylo for ease of use, and others suggested more social gatherings outside of the walks – ideas we’re actively exploring.

These testimonials are a powerful reminder that while the format may be simple, the impact is often life changing.

#### Volunteer Testimonial:

*"Volunteering for MenWalkTalk has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Seeing the impact it has on participants is truly inspiring."*

*"In my Senior volunteer role, I have attended and participated in the monthly MWT meetings. This has enabled me to stay connected to the charity’s operation programme, its successes and challenges and to bring a walk leader’s perspective to the discussions.*

*I am able to input and influence discussions and help thinking around priorities and outcomes for the charity and provide thinking and inputs for the MWT senior team to take to trustee meetings if required.*

*I have participated in the Sussex men’s mental health network meeting on behalf of MWT and work alongside a local campaigner and am about to link into the local social subscriber network which has been facilitated by the Operations manager, MWT.” - Alan, Senior*

#### **Volunteer**

*“I became a Mental Health First Aider in 2019 and was later encouraged by a friend to check out MenWalkTalk. After joining the Worthing Walk one September, I felt immediately welcomed. I soon began covering walks and now lead the Hove group. It’s small but powerful – it’s amazing what you can talk through in 90 minutes.*

*Since 2022, I’ve been a Senior Volunteer, contributing to Ops Meetings, supporting with health and safety, events, and mentoring new walk leader volunteers. MWT has given me the chance to grow too – from ASSIST suicide intervention training to representing the charity at national events. It’s been a rewarding and meaningful journey.” - Paul, Senior*

#### **Volunteer**

### **Statement by the Chair**

As we bring another year to a close, we are proud to reflect on a number of achievements at MenWalkTalk during a period of growth and continued support for the drive towards better wellbeing for men.

Matt and the team have made great strides in many key areas – and these are now really bearing fruit – more walk Leaders, volunteers and ultimately the increasing numbers of men attending our walks are testament to this

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed their time, effort, and resources to our mission. Together, we are helping break the stigma around men's wellbeing and create peer support that enables men to feel safe about speaking openly. I am confident that with continued support, MenWalkTalk will keep growing, helping even more men in the coming years.

Tom Acott

Chair of Trustees

MenWalkTalk