

Connect Exminster CIO

(registered charity number 1199203)

Financial Statements and Chairs Report
for the year ending 31st December 2025

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Chair's Report 2025 – Connect Exminster CIO

Background

Connect Exminster was set up at the beginning of 2022, previously running as a Christian community group since 2018, carrying out its activities with the oversight of Exminster Parish Church. It now runs with a small group of trustees and a large volunteer team.

Vision

As per our constitution our objects are:

- To advance the Christian faith for the public benefit, in accordance with the values and tenets of the Anglican Communion, in Exminster and the surrounding area, in particular but not exclusively by raising awareness of Christian beliefs, values and practices, through holding meetings, outreach and pastoral care in the community.
- To relieve poverty by the making of grants and the provision of items within the community of Exminster.
- To advance education, through the provision of workshops and courses in the community to help people enhance their life skills including within family related areas led by local professionals.

Chairperson's report

I am delighted to be able to present this Chair's report, detailing the highlights that Connect Exminster has been able to accomplish in 2025. We continue to be overseen by Exeter Diocese for our Safeguarding practices and work closely with the local churches and school. 2025 saw some significant donations to Connect which we have budgeted to spend in 2026. We were delighted to be able to provide a grant to St. Martin's Church to appoint a part time Children and Families Lead who is engaged with the wider community and developing programmes of support for outreach, pastoral care and life skills workshops. £3000 of our funds have been allocated to support a new Children and Families support role within the village.

We have continued to serve the community providing community connecting events, workshops and small grants and in this report I would like to highlight the main areas that we have been able to use our resources to make a difference. We have also been able to share our space with other community groups including music groups, a drumming workshop and the Exminster Preschool.

Faith Based & Community Events/Workshops

Throughout the year we have run a range of community activities open to anyone from Exminster to join. Fortnightly on Sundays we continue to host an informal discussion-based space to explore themes of faith and spirituality. These events often involve food together. We were delighted to support the village Summer Fayre in the vicarage garden, funding their bouncy castle and kids activities. Everything was free to access to ensure no-one was excluded and it was a wonderful event connecting the community together.

We have continued to run workshops and coffee mornings for the community. These help people learn new skills while connecting with new people to alleviate loneliness. This year, for the first



time we also partnered with St. Martin's church to offer a three day holiday club in the summer holidays. This had 40 children attend each day engaging in a range of faith based activities as well as life skills learning.

Refugee Support & Hardship Fund



Many Ukrainian families have chosen to settle in our village having come over at the start of the war. Initially we prioritised providing significant support to help with learning the language and accessing vital services, as well as providing

opportunities to meet with other Ukrainians for support. Now all our families are living independently (not in the homes of hosts) and we have identified the greatest need is for connection with the wider community - where they can develop their English and form friendships outside of their Ukrainian friendships. To that end we have continued to run monthly coffee mornings, where our Ukrainian community can meet with the wider community. We also had a wonderful evening Christmas wreath making, partnering Ukrainian and UK families together.



In addition we have continued to award small grants through our pastoral support fund, to be able to help those in Exminster who find themselves in financial difficulties. This is for anyone within the community not only our refugees. With thanks to the generosity of Exminster parish Council awarding us £1000 in 2024 we have been able to increase the support we can offer. With grants issued at the end of 2024 and in 2025 this grant has now been spent. Within our unrestricted fund, the trustees have allocated a further £500 should needs arise. The local schools, GP and community

groups will often signpost people in need of support to us for this.

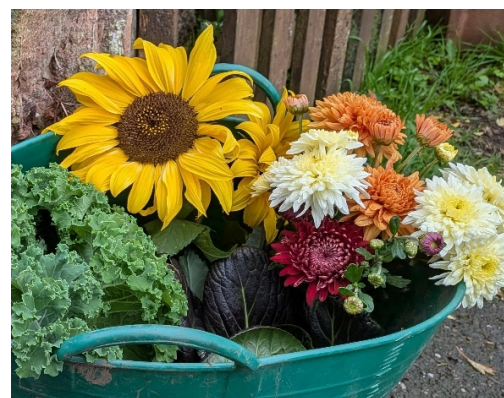
Eco Refill

We have continued to be able to open our Exminster's Eco Refill every Saturday morning. Our vision for this was to be another place of community connection, run by volunteers, that also would help the community make environmentally friendly choices. We highlighted that for many in our community, eco products were unaffordable so buying these products in bulk for wholesale prices and selling them on at costs (no profit) we hoped to encourage more people to

make these choices. We now have a wonderful community of volunteers where friendships have also grown and often regulars come in and enjoy a cuppa and a chat as well as getting their products. This year we have also hosted other community groups through Coffee Mornings in the chapel, so they can share their work with the wider community. These community coffee mornings have been another free space for connection. This ring fenced budget line covers its own costs, but makes no profit, passing all savings on to those who are trying to make more environmentally friendly choices.

Exminster Community Kitchen Garden

Exminster Community Garden, as overseen by Jeremy Pyne and a core team of volunteers is a project that emerged through the course of 2024. Discussion with St Martins Church and other village based organisations paved the way for spades in the ground from January 2025. With a green light from the church and a partnership developed with Connect Exminster - a co-ordinating steering group of volunteers was established and a weekly working session on site initiated to work on creating a garden which would



help 'reconnect

our community with nature, with food and with each other'.

The site had to be cleared of a whole range of waste, and shoulder height brambles and undergrowth to enable us to carve out growing spaces and bring the largely neglected allotment site back to life. The group have met every Friday - with the exception of Boxing day 2025 since then.

With the assistance of grant funding from the Parish Council, Devon CC along with generous donations from members of the community we have installed new sheds , incorporating rain water harvesting, raised beds, communal seating area, composting sites and growing spaces. A recent additional grant allocation from 'The Conservation Volunteers' will enable us to build our facilities and tools for use by children and families. The garden is managed using organic principles and aims to provide a wildlife friendly space - incorporating new bird boxes, bird baths and feeders. We hope to revamp the existing



pond to add to the wildlife that shares the space.

Open days and visits have been arranged with groups such as the brownies and pre-school. Events including open days, plant and produce stalls and a recent fruit grafting workshop have begun to explore other ways of engaging with the wider community. In January this year a celebration event was held to mark our first anniversary – attracting 30-40 people.

Looking ahead to our second year, the aim is to ramp up production of food and flowers to share (Including through the recently revamped community larder). With our improved on-site facilities we anticipate more opportunities to broaden engagement and plan for future development – for example through the improvement of access to make the garden available to those with more limited mobility.

Summary

This year our income was significantly higher at £19305, compared to our outgoings of £11551, largely due to a large grant given for the renovation of Emmanuel Chapel, the building we mainly use for events. This will be fully spent in 2026 replacing the guttering, soffits and fascias and redecorating some of the exterior paintwork. We continue to have sufficient reserves to cover our general expenses in to 2026 if needed. With this financial security we can expand our activities for 2026.

Connect Exminster End of year accounts
December 2025

Receipts/Income		Payments/Expenditure		Note	
Connect main fund		Connect main fund			
CIO One off donations - Connect main	1	£289.62	Kids & Youth activities - CIO		150
CIO Gift Aid Donations/Gift Aid	2	£3,302.59	Connect activities - CIO		393.38
CIO Chapel Usage Donations		£360.00	Utilities inc Wifi - CIO		852.86
CIO Supporting Interchurch donations		£28.52	Hardship fund CIO	5	804.98
CIO GASDS	2	£137.99	Supporting interchurch expense	6	3000
			Transfer from Unrestricted to designated	7	580
			Funds donated to other charities	8	206.06
Total		£4,118.72		Total	
Starting balance Jan 25		9405.09		Closing balance Dec 25	5987.28
Eco refill	4	2907.14	Eco refill		2917.52
Sales from Eco Refill		300	Bulk buying for Eco refill		
Grants for Eco Refill		3207.14		Total	2917.52
Total				Closing balance Dec 25	697.2
Refugees		0	Refugees	9	564
No income for refugee support		0	Support group costs		564
		486.63		Total	-77.37
				Closing balance Dec 25	
Kitchen Garden	10	1980	Kitchen Garden		1532.56
Kitchen Garden grants / donations		1980	Kitchen Garden Expenses		1532.56
		0		Total	447.44
				Closing balance Dec 25	
Chapel Fabric Fund	11	10000	Chapel Fabric Fund		550
Chapel Fabric Grants / donations		10000	Fabric Fund expenses		550
		0		Total	9450
				Closing balance Dec 25	
Starting balance		10299.3			
Total income		£19,305.86			
Total expenditure		11551.36			
Closing balance		£18,053.80			

1. Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. All within one bank account with ‘pots of monies’ to track designated and restricted funds. This includes our Eco refill pot so we can ensure this breaks even but is non profit making and our refugee fund, kitchen garden fund and chapel fabric fund to track grant monies given.	
2. These figures do not include the 2025 Gift Aid HMRC claim.	
3. Connect has had no further donations to the Hardship fund as it was spending the £1000 grant from the Parish Council given at the end of 2024.	
4. We continue to offer the Eco refill, led by volunteers, as a resource for the village which just breaks even.	
5. The full £1000 from the Parish Council was spent within this year	
6. This was carried over ringfenced money to fund a PT children and families worker in partnership with St. Martin’s Church.	
7. This included two grants from Connect - £380 to support the Kitchen Garden Fund and £200 to support the Eco Refill.	
8. Activities run by Connect raising funds for Nayamba School and Christian Aid Gaza appeal.	
9. While we have had no additional designated income for refugee support the remaining funds have focused on increasing community connections. This fund will now be closed.	
10. In addition to grants from Connect’s main fund, the Community Kitchen garden received grants from the Post Office (£100) Alan Connett’s Locality Grant (£300) and Exminster Parish Council (£1000)	
11. We are delighted to have a grant of £10,000 given via P Symons from the legacy of Brenda Winter to restore and repair the fabric of Emmanuel Chapel. There are significant external works that we have ring fenced this donation for.	
Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Cash assets - Bank Account = £18053.80 At the end of 2025 there were no liabilities/creditors.	

Notes:

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Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Connect Exminster CIO

On accounts for the year
ended

31 December 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1199203

Set out on pages

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2025.

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 (other than that disclosed below *) 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.

Signed:

Date: 7th May 2026

Name:

Jo Wilkey

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

No official qualifications. Currently hold the role of Operations and Data Protection Officer in a multi academy trust.

Address:

30, Reddaway Drive

Exminster, Exeter, Devon EX6 8SY

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.

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