

Company registration number 06681475 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number 1125877 (England and Wales)

CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

Trustees

A Afolabi
S Cooper
P Deans
P Elliott OBE
C Harrison
T Huitson
S Kaitesi
A Lee
H Owens
K Proudfoot
E Slater

Senior management

L Goodwin Chief Executive

Country of incorporation

United Kingdom
(England and Wales) 06681475

Charity registration

England and Wales 1125877

Registered office

One Strawberry Lane
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 4BX

Auditor

Sumer Auditco Limited
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Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8EG

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CONNECTED VOICE (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE) CHAIR'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Chair's Report

I'm delighted to present our Annual Report for 2024 – 2025. It was a great year for us in many respects. We launched our new strategy Connecting People, Supporting Action in October, following extensive consultation with our members and stakeholders. The strategy gives us a strong foundation to ensure we provide services that support, connect and develop the VCSE sector in a rapidly changing external environment.

Our membership grew steadily and now stands at 860 VCSE organisations. Our networks, including Haref and the VCSE Alliance, continued to attract new members too, and have grown in strength and influence over the year. Our financial services saw a period of stabilisation after significant changes and staff churn during the preceding year. Our advocacy team developed excellent new person-centred training sessions, which have been beneficial for not only our members, but also public sector partners. Our volunteering team supported more volunteers than ever – always with a focus on working hand in hand with people, and targeting our support where it is most needed. We've built strong relationships in corporate volunteering and strengthened our ability to connect VCSE organisations to specialist pro bono support.

Sitting at the heart of everything we do is our support and development service, which supported VCSE organisations with advice and training on everything from sourcing funding opportunities to cyber security. We know that just being aware there is a team there for advice and support when you need it is a lifeline for many smaller VCSE groups, and we are proud we have been able to sustain a strong level of local support, thanks to ongoing commitment from our core funders. Their continued trust and investment makes a huge difference.

Things are not easy for the VCSE sector and individuals we support at the moment. Issues of reduced funding, cost pressures, community tensions, increased demand, increased complexity of need, and challenges in trustee and volunteer recruitment continue. We see it as an important part of our work to highlight such issues, and we are indebted to the many organisations who contribute to our networks and forums, providing us with valuable intelligence which helps us amplify our message about the value of the VCSE sector and to find practical ways of helping them to deliver the best services.

I'd like to thank my fellow trustees for their support, thoughtful input and constructive challenge over the past year. We face the same pressures as our members on many fronts, and having a strong board who are able to understand the challenges and debate the solutions is invaluable.

The whole staff team continues to impress us all with their commitment, creativity and hard work. They take great pride in our work and are excellent ambassadors for Connected Voice. I hope you enjoy reading our highlights of another busy and productive year



[Peter Deans \(Jul 2, 2026 15:01:56 GMT+1\)](#)

Peter Deans
Chair of Trustees, Connected Voice

Date: 23 April 2026

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2025, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The objectives of Connected Voice are, 'to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.'

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Our Values:

We amplify voices

From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We're open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

We champion equality

We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality. Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

We inspire change

Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions. Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community

We support action

We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

We connect people

At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East.

We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another.

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Our purpose

Connected Voice exists in service of organisations committed to voluntary and social action in Newcastle and Gateshead and beyond. We work to support the enduring mission of those organisations to benefit society by reducing inequality and enriching lives.

This year we fulfilled our purpose in the following ways:

- As a high-performing and well-led organisation; providing a voice for individuals and the VCSE sector
- By championing the value and importance of the VCSE sector across multiple channels and in decision-making forums
- By strengthening VCSE organisations through our advice and training services.
- By ensuring VCSE organisations had multiple opportunities to come together for peer support, networking, and working collaboratively
- By tailoring our support to VCSE organisations as they met growing levels of need and dealt with financial pressures
- By highlighting issues around health inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with ethnically marginalised communities
- By growing our Health Equity work through the Haref Allies programme, and Digital Inclusion programmes
- By continuing work on our EDI action plan, working towards ensuring our membership and staff team reflect the communities we serve.
- By growing our role in supporting volunteering, running Gateshead Volunteer Centre, supporting Volunteer Managers, and growing our work with volunteers with additional needs in Newcastle.
- By providing a range of independent advocacy services and support to vulnerable people.

Our Volunteers

We value the unique contribution of our volunteers (including our Trustees) and the added value they bring. It is our intention that all volunteers are supported and respected. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.

This year, staff continued to benefit from our volunteering policy, which allows them two paid days off per year to volunteer locally. We share examples of staff volunteering experiences within our team meetings. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers and ensure we follow best practice in volunteering. We hold the national Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA).

Our Staff

We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a Staff Council and an annual staff away day. We hold the Better Health at Work award at Gold level. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We provide drop-ins and support for staff on topics which they have identified as important, such as menopause, self-defence, and pensions. We also hold the Investors In People accreditation, and this year we celebrated 25+ years of accreditation.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

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Achievements and performance

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives, and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We provide expert advice on governance, on the policies and practices that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events and training to keep the VCSE sector informed, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence.

We support VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we continued to develop our role in representation and voice for the VCSE sector, gaining funding for a new role which will help us to expand opportunities.

We engage in local authority-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities because we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, local NHS, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, and many others.

We continued to develop our self-generated income through our paid-for services, which have become a core part of our offer and which support our overall sustainability.

During the year we undertook an extensive consultation with stakeholders including VCSE organisations, funders and partner organisations, to inform our new strategy. The strategy was launched in October 2025, just after the end of the reporting period.

Connected Voice Support and Development

Our Support and Development service supports VCSE organisations working in Newcastle and Gateshead. We provide advice and guidance on all aspects of running an organisation, a comprehensive training package and opportunities to network, collaborate, and share best practice.

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Support and Guidance

Our Support and Development team worked with **544** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including funding, governance, legal structures, policies and procedures, and organisational development.

"Thank you...for your invaluable guidance and being there for us at short notice, as well as all the other support you have been giving the organisation over the past few months. Your clear headed and caring approach has been very much appreciated!"

"Great meeting. Its kick started some movement, so I'll definitely be in touch soon to discuss our next steps further. It's really helpful to talk through this with someone who's put the deep thought into how this all works. We'll be sure to refer to your guidance documents, and I'll feedback as and when. Many thanks."

Funding

We helped VCSE organisations to secure **£2,014,446** of grant funding and organised our annual Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair, attracting **23** funders and **141** VCSE organisations.

"Thank you for putting on the event. We normally find that new and smaller groups like us are overlooked for funding. The funders that I talked to came up with some information that we didn't know we could apply for or ideas about doing joint applications with other groups that could improve our chances."

"Fantastic networking opportunities - will allow me to submit future funding bids."

Networking Events and Network Meetings

We delivered **16** successful events and meetings and during the period, attended by **127** organisations. They included:

- Network and Connect
- Making Your Building Work for You
- Newcastle and Gateshead Women and Girls Quarterly Network
- Gateshead Youth and Community Quarterly Network
- Gateshead VCSE Leaders Group Quarterly Meeting
- Newcastle Voluntary Sector Liaison Group (in partnership with Newcastle City Council)

"I will reframe my thinking with regards to networking. Prepare beforehand with questions to ask and what I want to get out of it. Use the toolkit and follow the process."

"I love being a member of the Women and Girls network. The meetings are calm, organised, useful and informative. I always gain connections and have necessary interesting conversations at the meetings that help me feel connected and in-tune with the women and girls' sector. The network and the staff that organise the network have helped us promote several projects, crowdfunds and opportunities we have available, which as a small charity is invaluable."

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Training

We delivered **19** training courses over the year. Sessions included: Funding Strategy, Effective Bid-Writing, Monitoring and Evaluation, Trustee Roles and Responsibilities, Using Social Media Effectively and an Introduction to Safeguarding. We worked with other Connected Voice departments to support training on Finance, Advocacy and Health Inequalities. The feedback from training was overwhelmingly positive.

We continue to work with two other local infrastructure organisations (North Tyneside VODA and Northumberland CVA) to offer an eLearning platform called Elements. From its launch in July 2019 to September 2025, 2,479 students have completed one or more Elements courses.

"The language was something I found challenging, Outputs Outcomes, Indicators and Impact. Learning the differences between these in a structured and practical way will help my approach to these parts of grant applications."

"This was awesome. Well, I realise half way through the session, I didn't understand M&E as much as I thought I did. I think I have been doing some of these things, mainly the monitoring, but in a very informal way and now I can understand how to action this. Legit 10/10 for a newbie like me, especially due to the sending of the info prior to the session. This allowed me to familiarise myself with the terminology and made my experience significantly better."

OurGateshead

The OurGateshead community website has continued to increase its visitor numbers and page views. During the year, there were **563,370** site visits with **1,579,570** pages viewed. This was an increase of **56%** and **78%** respectively on last year's figures.

"I am a work coach at Gateshead Jobcentre and specialise in supporting our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) customers into employment. I have always used your website to support my customers to apply for the valuable voluntary experience throughout Gateshead that you offer."

"The site is clearly laid out and easy to use. Very helpful in finding what services are available to support the people we are working with...the advanced search feature will make sign posting easier."

Premium Services

During the year we provided paid-for services to **26** organisations. These are specialised pieces of work that take us significant time to complete. They include organisational and governance reviews, charity registration, policy writing and bespoke training courses.

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Information

We are a key source of information for the VCSE sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. Our follower numbers on social media continue to grow each year. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed fortnightly CV news bulletins to **2,000** plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly health and social care bulletin (merged with CV News from March 25)
- Produced three digital magazines shared with around **1,600** members and key contacts.
Magazine themes:
 - Working Across Sectors
 - Learning and Development
 - Resilience and Renewal
- Followers on LinkedIn: **2,750** as of 30.09.25
- Followers on Facebook: **1,802** as of 30.09.25
- Followers on Bluesky: **302** as of 30.9.25

Following a review of our communications strategy and link to EDI, we stopped posting on Twitter/X and have created a profile on the social media platform Bluesky.

VCSE Alliance Gateshead and Newcastle

The Alliance was initially created (in 2024) to support smaller-sized voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations that support people with health and wellbeing across Gateshead. Following changes to the structure of the ICB the contract was extended to include VCSE organisations based in Newcastle. This year we:

- Increased the Alliance membership to 130, adding 40 Newcastle members in the first 6 months.
- Collaborated with organisations who work with children and young people to give feedback on the mental health pathway from their perspective, and also to share the views of parents and young people. This was used in the overall review of the pathway and influenced the development of the pilots mentioned below.
- Managed a number of pilot grant programmes for the ICB, bringing over £1 million into the VCSE in Newcastle and Gateshead. This includes Therapeutic Activities for children and young people on waiting lists for mental health support or an assessment of neurodiversity, a therapeutic music programme for adults, neurodiversity support designed by and for neurodiverse young people, and a safe haven for young people in distress.
- Ran Connected Voice Health and Wellbeing Events in Newcastle and Gateshead which are open to all VCSE groups, but are themed on issues identified by the Alliance.
- Worked with Gateshead Public Health to collaborate on their Health and Wellbeing Strategy and built links with Public Health in Newcastle to develop similar collaboration.

Connected Voice Haref

Connected Voice Haref works with ethnically marginalised communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them. We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs.

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Haref Network

In the Haref Network we have **112** organisations, up from 90 in the previous year, all representing ethnically marginalised community groups and projects.

We ran **2** Haref Network meetings with discussions on Access to Services and Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health. We also held **8** Health Information sessions for Haref network members covering topics such as Diabetes and Nutrition, access to pharmacy, and dementia and memory.

Haref Allies

By the end of September 2025, we had **96** people from **78** organisations signed up as Haref Allies. This has almost doubled from 50 Allies in 2024..

We held **2** Haref Allies skills building sessions on Good Practice for delivering health and wellbeing information to diverse communities, and Cultural Competency/ Cultural Sensitivity.

Cultural Competency Training

Our work in this area was paused for a significant period of the year for staffing reasons, but we got back on track towards the end of the year. **10** multiagency sessions were delivered as part of the Newcastle City Council contract.

- A combined total of 190 attendees participated in Cultural Competency sessions:
- 108 attendees from Multi- agency sessions
- 5 Premium paid for sessions were delivered to 75 attendees
- 1 Haref Allies session was delivered with 7 attendees

“The videos were very helpful and informative with examples of how it feels in practice and the challenges they face”

“Brilliant introduction to cultural competency, I liked the anecdotes and thought the session was incredibly thought provoking”

Research Projects

- **The Comfrey Project - Gateshead Refugee Voices.** Haref worked in partnership with The Comfrey Project with an aim to secure enhanced mental health services for people seeking asylum and refugees in Gateshead by working with local health authorities, NHS, and policymakers. We helped secure a commitment from local health commissioners to increase the number of days and opening hours of the GP clinic for asylum seekers and refugees to three days per week, both morning and afternoon. Haref supports the collation of Gateshead Refugee Voices in different formats to demonstrate lived experience and stories. Haref also provides strategic support and guidance to the partnership in working with statutory services.
- **Exploring the health and social care needs of Older South Asians with Newcastle University.** Haref is funded to help with the delivery of this project and shape research involvement. This work considered how the attitudes based on Health and Social Care Provision for South Asian Communities increased their care needs.

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- **Discharge from hospital project with Newcastle University (School of Pharmacy).** The research focuses on the experience of hospital discharge and returning home from hospital, and how this transition could be improved. The research hopes to develop and test a model of hospital discharge that brings together health and social care and charitable organisations to make sure the right support is in place for a timely and safe hospital discharge. Haref supported with developing focus groups for the research and supported links to practitioners and community members for their workshops.

Health Information Sessions

Haref provided capacity and support to initiate information sessions with Network members on topics they are interested in, which were then delivered by our Haref Allies. This year we supported the following sessions:

- Al-Ihsan Mothers and Toddlers Group and NUTH session on Oral Health
- Singh Sabha Punjabi School and NECA session on Gambling Harms
- Small Sparks session for GopShop Bangladeshi Women's Group and three Haref Allies; Marie Curie, Tyne and Wear Fire service, and Farah Chemists who provided Health Checks.
- Bangladeshi Women's Group, Dementia and Memory
- Farrah Chemists, Al-Ihsan, Health Checks
- NGPS, Bilal Masjid, Health Bus
- Ramadan Diabetes and Nutrition health information sessions
- The Feel-Good Group, Wellbeing Outing to Jesmond Dene
- Diabetes Train the Trainer training carried out by Haref Allies delivering to ethnically marginalised groups in Gateshead

Sharing experiences of accessing health services

Haref provided paid opportunities for network group members to have their say, influence health service delivery and share their experience. 6 community groups were supported to share their story of using a health service, either in anonymised written transcript, audio or in video format.

These case studies are then shared with the Integrated Care Board for their Patient Voices board meetings. Stories that are heard at the board meetings then get a response from the Integrated Care Board and clinical leads are encouraged to give feedback.

Commissioning of Interpreters and Translators in Public Services

Haref worked with Success for All, Everyday Language Solutions, English Unlocked and US Language Services and Consultancy about the commissioning and standards of interpreters and translators' services for people whose first language is not English. We found there are several key issues with the way interpreters and translators are commissioned in public services:

- 1.The commissioning system for the provision of interpreters and translators is not designed to support local and smaller providers.
- 2.The quality control on current providers is not adequate, there are poor employment rights and pay, a lack of adequate supervision, and a lack of qualified interpreters and translators.
- 3.People do not know their rights around asking for interpreters and translators in different settings, and they are not getting a service that works for them due to the first two issues.
- 4.Staff are not trained or upskilled to work professionally with interpreters and translators and require training.
- 5.VCSE organisations struggle to cover the costs of using interpreters and translators, as funding for this is often not included in funding bids.

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We collated information on the key issues, why interpreter quality matters, and suggestions on what commissioners need to do to make it more equitable towards local and smaller providers, including ongoing quality control on providers. This information was shared with Commissioners and key contacts in statutory services and within the VCSE.

Newcastle Clinical Research Facility (CRF) community open day

CRF held a pilot community day at their Clinical Ageing Research Unit (CARU) to raise awareness of health research and the importance of underserved communities getting involved in such research. Haref staff supported links with community groups to attend. The group visited the GAIT lab, which included an introduction to movement analysis, and how the same technology is used in films such as The Incredible Hulk. They also visited the Electroencephalography (EEG) lab, which measures brainwaves, for a demo.

Discharge from hospital project with Newcastle University

Haref are funded partners in research being conducted by the School of Pharmacy at Newcastle University. The research focuses on the experience of hospital discharge and returning home from hospital, and how this transition could be improved. The research hopes to develop and test a model of hospital discharge that brings together health and social care and charitable organisations to make sure the right support is in place for a timely and safe hospital discharge. Haref are supporting with developing focus groups for the research and supporting links with practitioners and community members for their workshops.

Ramadan calendars 2025

Haref worked with 16 mosques across North Tyneside, Gateshead and Newcastle and with Glaucoma UK and Diabetes UK to get the most up to date health information relating to fasting for the calendars. We printed over 4000 calendars which were distributed to 16 mosques and partners in the VCSE sector, Health and Social Care services, GPs.

Communications

The Haref monthly bulletin increased to 1,093 subscribers by September 2025

Health Equity

This area of our work supports VCSE involvement in health equity work across Newcastle and Gateshead.

Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Gateshead

- Management and chairing of **10** Gateshead Digital Inclusion Steering Group meetings, with an average membership of **30** staff members and senior leaders from Gateshead Council, VCSE organisations, NHS Primary Care, NHS ICB, NHS BSA, NHS Gateshead Foundation Trust, industry, Newcastle University.
 - **21** smaller VCSE organisations in Gateshead received UKSPF funding in April 2024, to carry out their bespoke digital inclusion projects with the support of the Gateshead Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care Project Manager. These projects concluded at the end of March 2025.
 - Organised **14** different digital inclusion training sessions, responding to the identified needs and issues that VCSE organisations have been currently facing in Gateshead, with an overall attendance of **213** people.
 - In March 2025 - Organised and delivered an end of the UKSPF 2023-25 project event, with 44 attendees, presentations by 6 VCSE organisations.
 - Supported 122 organisations working in Gateshead with information, opportunities, support and training via UKSPF grants.
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- December 2024 - Organised a focus group in Gateshead for Strand Partners and Digital Poverty Alliance on how TV impacts life and community connections in Gateshead, for report to present to Government about plans to re-shape or remove free tv provision.
- Digital Inclusion and Generative AI in Adult Social Care – collaborative research bid with Gateshead HDRC, Newcastle University Open Lab, Gateshead Digital Inclusion project. Submitted to the National Institute for Health and Care Research – unsuccessful outcome
- May 2025 – Training session on digital inclusion for Gateshead Primary Care during PLT – **40** attendees
- March-May 2025 – collaborated with Connected Voice Gateshead Volunteer Centre and their peer network to create a Digital Good Practice Guide for VCSE Volunteering-Involving Organisations

Gateshead Digital Inclusion Network online sessions delivered. The Connected Voice Digital Inclusion Network expanded to include Newcastle, with monthly information sessions on different digital inclusion matters delivered by guest speakers.

Gateshead Tech4Communities Established a relationship with national charity Digital Poverty Alliance. The Digital Poverty Alliance proposed a device refurbishing project at the beginning of 2025, with the opportunity to involve Gateshead Council and Gateshead Communities. Working with the Digital Poverty Alliance, Gateshead Council, Gateshead Libraries, Birtley Community Centre, Chopwell Regeneration Shop, Green Heart Collective, St Chads, Teams Life Centre, Dunston Volunteer Library, Low Fell Volunteer Library, Rowlands Gill Volunteer Library, Whickham Volunteer Library for this project. Work underway with the Council's IT Team and Digital Poverty Alliance to pilot the refurbishment of the Council's decommissioned devices. The pilot was officially launched in August 2025

Gateshead Council's Corporate Social Responsibility collaboration – management of the Virgin/Media O2 offer of 5 years of free broadband for **15 VCSE organisations** in Gateshead – organisations connected by October 2025: Pelaw Community Bowling Club, Heartbroken to Healed, The Chev, Gladstone Terrace Youth Council, Green Heart Collective.

Digital Drop-Ins 15 digital drop-in sessions in VCSE drop-ins that are already existing in Gateshead (Joe's Place, Barmoor Hub, Alive Church, Gateshead Muslim Centre).

Digital Switchover

We organised a drop-in about the digital phone switchover at the Jewish Community Council of Gateshead. Many people in the Jewish Communities in Gateshead had a landline only. We requested a male and a female staff to provide culturally appropriate advice in a segregated space. 45 people attended the drop-in.

"Very informative drop-in - within a few minutes, the advisor had explained what the changes would be and basically explained that in my case, it wouldn't affect me much besides for having to use the local area code when calling out."

"Thank you for the support you are providing to our community, especially because the majority of people only have a landline"

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Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Newcastle

Building on a successful programme in Gateshead, the staff member for Newcastle started in September 2024. This role is to support collaborative working to enable digital Inclusion for people, the VCSE and statutory services in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Five steering groups have taken place.

89 separate engagements with grassroots organisations and VSCE partners lead to 39 developmental pieces of work, including:

- **Training for NHS Primary Care Staff** Delivered Digital Inclusion workshop at Primary Care PLT
- **Supporting 30 organisations** across Newcastle's VCSE, health, and community sectors to connect them to key digital inclusion resources such as Good Things Foundation, AbilityNet, Data support and digital skills providers—enabling groups to access devices, connectivity, funding, and specialist support.
- **50 targeted connections** linking organisations to **funding pathways, NHS App insight, device donation and access routes, and skills support**, strengthening capacity of groups working with older people, ethnically marginalised communities, carers, asylum seekers, and families.

“Digital inclusion and literacy are so important for both our staff and the women and families we supportwhen digital isn't your area of expertise, it can feel really daunting to even know where to start. There are so many factors to think about – researching existing services, understanding referral pathways, looking into funding, and being aware of both the risks and opportunities that come with digital tools”

North East and North Cumbria VCSE Partnership Programme

This programme is run by VONNE and its aim is to ensure that the VCSE sector is embedded at all levels of our Integrated Care System (ICS). The VCSE sector is able to provide extensive expertise and reach into the communities that receive health and care services, particularly those that the NHS can find it difficult to connect with. Our Chief Executive and the Health Equity and Involvement Manager attend and represent Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE at key meetings.

- VCSE Partnership Programme Executive meeting
- VCSE Partnership Programme Steering group
- Newcastle ICB Place Committee
- Gateshead Cares System Board
- Collaborative Newcastle Joint Directors Team
- ICP North Partnership meeting

Communications

For many years we produced a separate Health Bulletin (formerly known as 'On the Hoof'), which covered:

- Updates on Connected Voice Health Equity projects
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about the local NHS, council services and multi-agency structures
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about local, regional and national health policy
- Information about local health events and activities
- Information about current consultations, research and reports

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We made the decision in March 2025 to end the separate bulletin and increase the health section in the CV News bulletin. The **1,190** people signed up to the Health bulletin were notified and encouraged to sign up to our general mailing list.

Connected Voice Business Services

Working for the first time this year as a team within Connected Voice rather than a separate trading company, Connected Voice Business Services continued to provide financial services for VCSE organisations across Newcastle and Gateshead.

We supported year end accounts preparation and completed Independent Examinations for **93** organisations. We provided Bookkeeping and management account services for **13** organisations.

Our Business Services team also supported organisations to switch to digital finance systems, providing training as QuickBooks Pro certified advisors.

Our Independent Examiners ensured organisations were up to date with actual and proposed legal and financial reporting changes for charities.

- We updated our finance training offer during the year, and ran the following courses:
- Creating trustee reports for annual accounts
- Understanding financial statements
- budgeting and forecasting

"Thanks for helping us to present our accounts in such a clear way, and for all your support with our questions!"

Connected Voice Advocacy

In 2024/25 our advocacy service supported 592 people across multiple projects and worked with them on 614 topics, providing 14,729 hours of direct advocacy. Analysis of trends this year shows a high proportion of people experiencing homelessness and poor housing. We also saw increases in poverty, isolation and increased support for autistic adults in the community.

Commitment to accessibility

This year we focused on making our service more accessible to everyone. We worked with a training company called English Unlocked to consider our written information for people whose first language isn't English, and we focused on a plain directive approach for those with other communication needs. A key part of this was re-writing our mission. This gave us a stronger commitment to our purpose and aligned more closely with the Connected Voice Strategy.

Our mission. -this is what we care about

We want social justice in the Northeast of England.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

We help people who are in vulnerable situations to-

- Speak up for themselves.
- Understand their rights.
- Make their own choices.
- Get services they need.

We know that-

- People should be involved in making important decisions for their own life.
- Everyone communicates differently. We listen and make sure they are heard.

We stand with people who are treated unfairly or suffer hate-

- We use the law to challenge bad decisions and unfair treatment.
- We work with leaders and organisations to fix broken systems.
- We listen to people's stories and use them to make services better.

We care-

- We follow a 'Code of Practice.' These rules make sure we do things the right way.
- We give high quality support.
- We win awards for our work.

Commitment to cohesion

Into our ninth year of funding from the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, we continued to deliver advocacy for approximately 80 hate crime victims each year.

We continued to cascade the findings from our "Improving Responses to Hate Relationships" research by Durham and Northumbria universities. In 2025 we collaborated on a digital tool called HATE ID which supports professionals to understand which situations are hate crime, or repeated hate incidents and then gives practical tips on what to do. We have attended local authorities Community Cohesion meetings around the region to share the findings from the research and to raise awareness of the HATE ID app and our training offer.

We created a training programme in 2025 called Hate Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategies so that workers could have a better understanding of the impact of hate and harassment on individuals and communities. The course helps workers to manage risk and implement a person-centred approach to support. We delivered to frontline staff in regional housing provider Gentoo.

Commitment to empowerment

We brought people together this year to consult on their experience as service users of advocacy. From their feedback we changed how we take on new cases and create an online referral process. offer and encouraged use of DIY Advocate app. This year we rebranded to Know Your Rights training to be clearer on its purpose.

"Advocate helped me to verbalise my thoughts, guiding me and helped lower my anxiety. Now I can put up a good fight."

Successful fundraising in year allowed us to focus on housing cases. We facilitated group advocacy for residents in Gateshead affected by poor housing conditions to effect change and implement large scale housing improvements

We maintain seats on the Adult Safeguarding Boards in Newcastle and Gateshead and sit on the steering group of the Sunderland University SAFE project capturing experiences of older people's safeguarding.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Commitment to strategic advocacy

In 2025 the Parliamentary Health Ombudsman and Equality and Human Rights commission consulted advocacy organisations on their aims and strategy, and we were able to offer insights to them on our experiences of complaints processes.

Locally, we responded to Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner consultation on out of court resolutions and facilitated events to ensure victims put forward their views. We liaised with police teams on the anti-social behaviour teams strategies.

The statistics and case studies we collate helped inform the 2025 Tyne and Wear Citizens consultation.

The Mental Health Act continues to progress through Parliament, and we contribute via our national advocacy network. Due to our IMHA service in Mitford National the Autistic Unit, we also contributed locally to standardisation of long-term segregation reviews for in-patient settings under the Mental Health Act.

Sharing our learning

We developed a programme of training for VCSE organisations and other frontline workers, which builds on the principles of advocacy charter called Social Justice Champions. We offer a modular approach, and we have tailored courses to organisation's needs and specialisms. This has a focus on Person Centred Approaches, Effective Communication and supporting people with neurological conditions.

"Thank you so much for such a brilliant training event – we've all been talking about it today and gained so much from it – new ideas, refreshed approaches and simply reminders of what we already do and how to always strive to improve it."

Our year in numbers

- Advocated for 592 people across multiple projects and worked with them on 614 topics providing 14,729 hours of direct advocacy
- Gained over £23,180 for people by maximising their entitlements, claiming compensation and challenging welfare awards and care packages.
- Ensured 12 people were safeguarded or prevented from harm and abuse
- Advocated for 40 new people facing court hearings for child protection cases, rehabilitation planning after life changing accidents, or upholding the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards for people

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Connected Voice Volunteering

During 2024/25, our Volunteering service continued to grow, expanding from three to four projects with the launch of Newcastle Support into Volunteering Pathway. This new initiative started in August 2025 and aims to support people in recovery from substance misuse and living in Newcastle into volunteering. Outlined below are our key achievements.

Gateshead Volunteer Centre

The Volunteer Centre Quality Accredited service processed **932** enquires from people for advertised volunteering opportunities on the OurGateshead community website.

"I hope you are well. I just wanted to get in touch to say a massive thank you for continuing to promote Schoolreaders on OurGateshead. We have had several applications as a result and now have volunteers who are already visiting local schools or waiting for placements."

We supported **60** people with additional needs into volunteering opportunities.

"Thank you so much for your support. Means a lot to me. Honest."

Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network continued to grow over the year with meetings themed on topics including digital, accessibility, collaboration and skills for employment.

"I really enjoyed the network meeting and came away with lots of useful information – Thank You."

Volunteering Newcastle

Through Volunteering Newcastle, we supported organisations create **34** new volunteering opportunities and provided organisational support to **20** VCSE organisations, providing them with more robust and effective policies, procedures and strategy to better support their volunteers.

Newcastle Volunteer Coordinators Network continued to grow over the year, with meetings themed on topics including accessibility, digital inclusion, and equity, diversion and inclusion in volunteering.

"The Connected Voice meetings and sessions have been invaluable to me as a Volunteer Coordinator. It can be isolating working in this role as I am the only one dealing with volunteer management. The meetings and training provided by Connected Voice has been a great way to network and chat to other professionals who deal with volunteering. The training has been really useful also helping me gain an insight into procedures and practices for managing volunteers. Thank you for being a great support mechanism."

Sector Connector

Sector Connector organised **10** free workshops and events in collaboration with **eight** local, regional and national businesses for VCSE organisations. Workshop themes included changes to employment law, navigating charity mergers and collaboration, and new duties for employers in the prevention of sexual harassment.

Sector Connector collaborated with Home Group in April 2025 to deliver a trustee's event for their employees, resulting in two charities securing new trustees with skills across legal, finance, and health and safety.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

“Connecting with people who are enthusiastic to contribute their time, skills, energy and lived experience by joining our Trustee board, will support to lay the foundation for our future growth and impact. Thank you for the opportunity to bring onboard people keen to make the world more accessible and inclusive”.

Financial review

Review of transactions and financial position

The balance sheet shows that at 30 September 2025 total funds carried forward are £676,961 (2024: £727,465), of which £460,072 (2024: £365,817) relates to unrestricted funds, £21,653 (2024: £21,653) relates to designated funds and £195,236 (2024: £339,995) relates to restricted funds. The specific earmarked restricted funds projects are detailed in note 24 of the accounts and note 25 for designated funds.

This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £7,653 (2024: £15,399) and net current assets of £669,308 (2024: £712,066).

Connected Voice holds contracts from the NHS and local authorities, as well as applying for grants from charitable trusts and foundations. We are growing our self-generated income through development of paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through contracts. In the current year this was three contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources, is well placed to know what opportunities are available. We use a full cost recovery model, which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease in light of inflation, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the board meet to set budgets annually. The management team reviews financial performance monthly, and the board reviews it quarterly via a finance sub committee and the board meetings. Day to day financial management and reporting is managed by our finance arm - Connected Voice Business Services.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values. Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year

Assets

The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed assets during the year are set out in note 15 to the accounts.

Financial dependency

The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals.

Going Concern

The Trustees have considered the level of funds and forecast income and expenditure for a period of 12 months after the date of approval of these financial statements, the budgeted income and expenditure is considered sufficient given the levels of reserves held by the Charity. Therefore, the Trustees have adopted the going concern basis of preparation for these financial statements.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Reserves Policy

The Trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed again this year that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.

Three months running costs would equate to around £210,000 and five months £350,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2024. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the Trustees for review and approval.

The 'free reserves' of the charity (defined as those unrestricted funds not designated for specific purposes or tied up in fixed assets) stood at £452,419 (2024: £350,418). The Trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group.

Risk management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board reviews the strategic risk assessment annually and the full report is discussed at a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board.

Indemnity insurance

The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

Structure, governance and management

The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

Governing documents

The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector primarily in Newcastle and Gateshead. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met five times during this financial year. It holds a special away day meeting with senior managers, once a year, in order to look at opportunities and define strategy for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with over 844 members.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

A Afolabi

S Cooper

P Deans

P Elliott OBE

C Harrison

T Huitson

S Kaitesi

A Lee

H Owens

K Proudfoot

E Slater

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Trustees are elected from the membership. Notice is sent to all members, and if a ballot is required, it is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting. Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited regularly and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process. The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has extensive experience in the charity sector and of governance. The treasurer is a chartered accountant with significant experience of the charity sector.

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code (copies are available from the CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU).

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction;
- ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts; and
- pay in accordance with the company's contractual and other legal obligations.

Trade creditors of the company at the year end were equivalent to 14 day's purchases, based on the average daily amount invoiced by suppliers during the year.

Organisational structure

The Board of trustees, which can have up to fourteen members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets four times per year and there are three sub groups covering finance, advocacy, and volunteering, which report into the Board. Task and Finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary. This year we closed the Task and Finish group for workforce development, after the agreement of our new pay policy, and created one for trustee recruitment. We have staff-led groups who take forward our EDI and Climate emergency action plans, and these report into the board. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Pay policy for senior staff

Pay policy for senior staff The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East.

We understand that in light of increasing inflation and a difficult employment market, pay should continue to be reviewed regularly. Connected Voice's Pay Policy covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups. The pay policy allows for staff progression within pay bands, based on performance.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Connected Voice for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Sumer Auditco Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



[Peter Deans \(Jul 2, 2026 15:01:56 GMT+1\)](#)

**Peter Deans
Chair of Trustees, Connected Voice**

29 June 2026

CONNECTED VOICE (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE) INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)
TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE**

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)
TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE**

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities, including fraud

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the sector in which it operates, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements including UK financial reporting standards, Company Law and Charity Law.
- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were discussed amongst the engagement team at the planning stage and the team remained alert throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence and legal costs incurred; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Mr Stephen Slater (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Sumer Auditco Limited, Statutory Auditor
Accountants
Unit 2
Gosforth Park Avenue
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8EG**

30 June 2026

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Current financial year		Unrestricted funds general 2025 £	Unrestricted funds designated 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes					
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	3	13,759	-	-	13,759	8,974
Charitable activities	4	878,646	-	941,911	1,820,557	1,802,612
Other trading activities	5	6,539	-	-	6,539	21,768
Investments	6	26,027	-	-	26,027	36,961
Total income		<u>924,971</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>941,911</u>	<u>1,866,882</u>	<u>1,870,315</u>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	60	-	-	60	3,570
Charitable activities	8	830,656	-	1,086,670	1,917,326	1,865,990
Other expenditure	10	-	-	-	-	18,528
Total expenditure		<u>830,716</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,086,670</u>	<u>1,917,386</u>	<u>1,888,088</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	11	-	-	-	-	3,926
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>94,255</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(144,759)</u>	<u>(50,504)</u>	<u>(13,847)</u>
Net movement in funds	15	94,255	-	(144,759)	(50,504)	(13,847)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Fund balances at 1 October 2024		<u>365,817</u>	<u>21,653</u>	<u>339,995</u>	<u>727,465</u>	<u>741,312</u>
Fund balances at 30 September 2025		<u>460,072</u>	<u>21,653</u>	<u>195,236</u>	<u>676,961</u>	<u>727,465</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Prior financial year		Unrestricted funds general 2024 £	Unrestricted funds designated 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes				
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	8,974	-	-	8,974
Charitable activities	4	886,947	-	915,665	1,802,612
Other trading activities	5	21,668	-	100	21,768
Investments	6	36,961	-	-	36,961
Total income		954,550	-	915,765	1,870,315
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	3,570	-	-	3,570
Charitable activities	8	1,029,074	22,324	814,592	1,865,990
Other expenditure	10	18,528	-	-	18,528
Total expenditure		1,051,172	22,324	814,592	1,888,088
Net gains/(losses) on investments	11	3,926	-	-	3,926
Net income/(expenditure)		(92,696)	(22,324)	101,173	(13,847)
Transfers between funds		32,884	(33,290)	406	-
Net movement in funds	15	(59,812)	(55,614)	101,579	(13,847)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances at 1 October 2023		425,629	77,267	238,416	741,312
Fund balances at 30 September 2024		365,817	21,653	339,995	727,465

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET**

AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

		2025		2024	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	16		7,653		15,399
Current assets					
Stocks	18	9,336		21,691	
Debtors	19	369,525		679,655	
Investments	20	-		232,777	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,191,783		618,735	
		2,570,644		1,552,858	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	(1,901,336)		(840,792)	
Net current assets			669,308		712,066
Total assets less current liabilities			676,961		727,465
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	24		195,236		339,995
Unrestricted funds - general			460,072		365,817
Unrestricted funds - designated	25		21,653		21,653
			676,961		727,465

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 29 June 2026

Keith Proudfoot

[Keith Proudfoot \(Jul 3, 2026 10:02:03 GMT+1\)](#)

**K Proudfoot
Trustee**

Company registration number 06681475 (England and Wales)

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	30		1,314,244		282,383
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-		(1,816)	
Proceeds from disposal of subsidiaries		-		2	
Purchase of other investments		-		(48,372)	
Proceeds from disposal of other investments		232,777		279,584	
Investment income received		26,027		36,961	
Net cash generated from investing activities			258,804		266,359
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			1,573,048		548,742
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			618,735		69,993
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			2,191,783		618,735

CONNECTED VOICE (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE) NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Connected Voice is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is One Strawberry Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4BX.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised for a specific purpose. The cost arising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when the trust becomes entitled. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be qualified. The value of the services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts in line with the SORP (FRS102). Assets donated are recognised in full as donations and fixed assets.

Income is deferred only where criteria for recognition as incoming resources in the Statement of Financial Activities does not exist at the balance sheet date.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Incoming resources from charitable trading activities and commercial trading activities are accounted for when earned as the related services are provided. Services provided to clients which at the balance sheet date have not been billed to clients and where there is a right to consideration, have been recognised as income. Income recognised in this manner is based on an assessment of the fair value of the services provided at the balance sheet date as a proportion of the total value of the engagement. Unbilled revenue is included in work in progress.

Investment income is included when receivable.

1.5 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of generation funds comprises the costs associated with the commercial trading activities of Business Services department.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the expenditure when incurred.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing over £1,000 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

Restricted electronic office equipment	25% straight line basis
Electronic office equipment	25% straight line basis

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.12 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged as an expense on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Donations and gifts	13,759	8,974
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Donations and gifts		
Sir James Knott Trust	12,000	7,000
Other Donations	1,759	1,974
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>13,759</u>	<u>8,974</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Commercial Income	236,635	-	236,635	217,663	-	217,663
Services provided under contract	501,923	940,436	1,442,359	455,180	915,665	1,370,845
Sales of services	130,983	1,475	132,458	204,287	-	204,287
Other income	9,105	-	9,105	9,817	-	9,817
	<u>878,646</u>	<u>941,911</u>	<u>1,820,557</u>	<u>886,947</u>	<u>915,665</u>	<u>1,802,612</u>
Summary of grants						
Newcastle City Council	-	160,833	160,833	-	161,972	161,972
Gateshead Council	-	174,500	174,500	-	174,500	174,500
NHS ICB	44,612	-	44,612	44,706	-	44,706
The National Lottery Community Fund via VODA	-	31,766	31,766	-	15,649	15,649
Newcastle City Council - Health & Wellbeing Cultural Competency	51,422	-	51,422	51,422	-	51,422
Gateshead Council - Volunteer Centre	-	78,499	78,499	-	77,499	77,499
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (Northumbria)	-	68,502	68,502	-	75,502	75,502
The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre	-	40,009	40,009	-	36,587	36,587
Gateshead Council - Community Foundation	-	17,729	17,729	-	17,729	17,729
Lloyds Bank Foundation via Comfrey Project	-	2,950	2,950	-	-	-
Newcastle Council DATRIG Grant - Newcastle Public Health	-	12,250	12,250	-	-	-
NHS Newcastle and Gateshead IBC	240,479	-	240,479	242,133	-	242,133
North East Combined Authority via VODA (UKSPF)	-	83,278	83,278	-	138,171	138,171
Newcastle Council DATRIG Grant - Supported Volunteer Pathway	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	-
Carry forward	<u>336,513</u>	<u>690,316</u>	<u>1,026,829</u>	<u>338,261</u>	<u>697,609</u>	<u>1,035,870</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

4 Income from charitable activities (Continued)

	Unrestricted funds general 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds general 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Brought forward	336,513	690,316	1,026,829	338,261	697,609	1,035,870
Community Foundation - Refugees & Asylum Seekers	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Gateshead Council - Digital Inclusion	-	-	-	-	4,000	4,000
Gateshead Council (UKSPF) - Digital Inclusion	-	66,930	66,930	-	48,197	48,197
Newcastle Council - Digital Inclusion	50,000	-	50,000	4,167	-	4,167
ICB Newcastle Gateshead - Digital Inclusion Workforce	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	-
NIHR - Mental Health - Newcastle University	2,910	-	2,910	-	1,737	1,737
ICB via VONNE	-	18,125	18,125	-	24,686	24,686
MHCLG via Newcastle City Council	-	7,500	7,500	-	-	-
Gateshead Youth Mental Health NHS/ICS via Gateshead Council	-	-	-	-	75,000	75,000
NIHR via Sunderland University	-	1,121	1,121	-	-	-
Community Foundation - Riverbank Housing	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	-
The Barbour Foundation	20,000	-	20,000	20,000	-	20,000
ICB Newcastle Gateshead - Health Bulletin	-	6,569	6,569	-	6,583	6,583
Gateshead Council - Financial Sustainability Support	37,500	-	37,500	37,500	-	37,500
Newcastle Council - VCSE Infrastructure Support	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	-	50,000
Community Foundation - Guy Readman Endowment	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
The National Lottery Community Fund - Awards For All	-	20,000	20,000	-	20,000	20,000
Carry forward	501,923	840,561	1,342,484	454,928	887,812	1,342,740

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

4 Income from charitable activities (Continued)

	Unrestricted funds general 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds general 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Brought forward	501,923	840,561	1,342,484	454,928	887,812	1,342,740
ICB Newcastle Gateshead	-	24,191	24,191	-	-	-
MHCLG via Newcastle City Council	-	45,050	45,050	-	-	-
Necastle City Council - Small Sparks Plus	-	13,967	13,967	-	-	-
ICB Newcastle Gateshead - CYP Mental Health	-	16,667	16,667	-	-	-
Gateshead Council - HAREF Engagement	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
UKSPF Local Community Partnership	-	-	-	-	7,853	7,853
NIHR Hospital	-	-	-	252	-	252
	<u>501,923</u>	<u>940,436</u>	<u>1,442,359</u>	<u>455,180</u>	<u>915,665</u>	<u>1,370,845</u>

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Other income	6,539	-	6,539	21,668	100	21,768
	<u>6,539</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,539</u>	<u>21,668</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>21,768</u>

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Income from listed investments	177	30,358
Interest receivable	25,850	6,603
	<u>26,027</u>	<u>36,961</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

7 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Investment management	60	3,570

8 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Advocacy 2025 £	Voluntary Sector Support 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Advocacy 2024 £	Voluntary Sector Support 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Direct costs						
Staff costs	482,798	810,311	1,293,109	491,121	956,450	1,447,571
Activities directly undertaken	23,035	208,012	231,047	18,051	73,686	91,737
	<u>505,833</u>	<u>1,018,323</u>	<u>1,524,156</u>	<u>509,172</u>	<u>1,030,136</u>	<u>1,539,308</u>
Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)						
Support	96,077	297,093	393,170	68,509	258,173	326,682
	<u>601,910</u>	<u>1,315,416</u>	<u>1,917,326</u>	<u>577,681</u>	<u>1,288,309</u>	<u>1,865,990</u>
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds - general	466,882	363,774	830,656	458,728	570,346	1,029,074
Unrestricted funds - designated	-	-	-	-	22,324	22,324
Restricted funds	135,028	951,642	1,086,670	118,953	695,639	814,592
	<u>601,910</u>	<u>1,315,416</u>	<u>1,917,326</u>	<u>577,681</u>	<u>1,288,309</u>	<u>1,865,990</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

9 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	107,940	110,613
Depreciation	7,746	5,281
Facility costs	62,497	103,176
Office costs	82,528	83,483
Professional fees	1,420	10,549
Bad debts	118,500	-
Governance costs	12,539	13,580
	<u>393,170</u>	<u>326,682</u>
Analysed between:		
Voluntary Sector Support	297,093	258,173
Advocacy	96,077	68,509
	<u>393,170</u>	<u>326,682</u>
	2025	2024
	£	£
Governance costs comprise:		
Audit fees	12,000	12,500
Annual Review, AGM & trustee planning	539	1,080
	<u>12,539</u>	<u>13,580</u>

10 Other expenditure

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Loss on closure of trading subsidiary	-	18,528
	<u>-</u>	<u>18,528</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

11 Gains and losses on investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Gains/(losses) arising on:		
Revaluation of investments	-	424
Sale of investments	-	3,502
	<u>-</u>	<u>3,926</u>
	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>3,926</u></u>

12 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

There were no expenses paid to trustees during the year totalling (2024: £nil).

13 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Advocacy	16	16
HAREF	6	6
Business Services	4	10
Support & Development	11	11
Core	3	3
Marketing	1	1
	<u>41</u>	<u>47</u>
	<u><u>41</u></u>	<u><u>47</u></u>

Employment costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	1,234,565	1,368,009
Social security costs	108,820	124,437
Other pension costs	57,664	65,738
	<u>1,401,049</u>	<u>1,558,184</u>
	<u><u>1,401,049</u></u>	<u><u>1,558,184</u></u>

Redundancy and termination payments totalling £3,000 were made in the reporting period due to restructuring of the Business Services department.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

13 Employees **(Continued)**

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
£70,000 - £80,000	1	1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Remuneration of key management personnel

Key management has been determined to be the Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer (2024: 1).

Trustees receive no remuneration or benefits.

The total remuneration of the senior management team was:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	80,534	78,410
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

14 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

15 Net movement in funds **2025** **2024**

£ **£**

The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):

Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	12,000	12,500
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	7,746	5,281
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

16 Tangible fixed assets	Restricted electronic office equipment	Electronic office equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 October 2024	19,771	60,514	80,285
At 30 September 2025	19,771	60,514	80,285
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 October 2024	19,771	45,115	64,886
Depreciation charged in the year	-	7,746	7,746
At 30 September 2025	19,771	52,861	72,632
Carrying amount			
At 30 September 2025	-	7,653	7,653
At 30 September 2024	-	15,399	15,399
17 Financial instruments		2025	2024
		£	£
Carrying amount of financial assets			
Instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss		-	232,777
18 Stocks		2025	2024
		£	£
Work in progress		9,336	21,691
19 Debtors		2025	2024
		£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:			
Trade debtors		235,985	449,114
Other debtors		18,949	31,008
Prepayments and accrued income		114,591	199,533
		369,525	679,655

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

20 Current asset investments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash held on deposit	-	232,777
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

21 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		18,957	90,983
Deferred income	22	1,850,449	672,217
Trade creditors		4,897	21,516
Other creditors		19,632	17,449
Accruals		7,401	38,627
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
		1,901,336	840,792
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

22 Deferred income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Arising from amounts invoiced in advance	1,850,449	672,217
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	1,850,449	672,217
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Movements in the year:		
Deferred income at 1 October 2024	672,217	7,396
Released from previous periods	(672,217)	(7,396)
Resources deferred in the year	1,850,449	672,217
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Deferred income at 30 September 2025	1,850,449	672,217
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

23 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025	2024
	£	£
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	57,664	65,738
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

24 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 October 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 September 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted IT equipment	4,942	-	(4,942)	-	-
HAREF (Restricted donations)	16,987	-	-	-	16,987
North of Tyne Volunteer Project	6,063	31,766	(31,269)	-	6,560
Gateshead Infrastructure Support	14,328	174,500	(176,403)	-	12,425
Gateshead Volunteer Centre	15,135	78,499	(84,192)	-	9,442
Newcastle Infrastructure Support	31,020	160,833	(157,956)	-	33,897
Health Bulletin	137	6,569	(5,470)	-	1,236
Help through Crisis	8,537	40,009	(41,067)	-	7,479
Hate Crime Advocacy Service	14,737	69,977	(75,646)	-	9,068
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	2,426	-	(2,426)	-	-
SAFE Project	-	1,121	(441)	-	680
Housing Advocacy	-	10,000	(9,851)	-	149
Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders - Hate Crime	-	7,500	(5,597)	-	1,903
Digital Inclusion in Gateshead	54,461	-	(2,996)	-	51,465
Social Prescribing in Newcastle	11,480	18,125	(23,133)	-	6,472
Health Equality Mental Health	17,014	-	(17,014)	-	-
Gateshead Youth Mental Health	75,000	-	(71,817)	-	3,183
Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders	-	45,050	(34,703)	-	10,347
Small Sparks Plus	-	13,967	(13,530)	-	437
CYP Mental Health and Neurodevelopment	-	16,667	(1,529)	-	15,138
VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance	-	24,191	(8,540)	-	15,651
UKSPF Digital Inclusion Gateshead	-	66,930	(66,930)	-	-
Digital Inclusion Workforce	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Awards For All	16,930	-	(8,411)	-	8,519
HAREF Engagement	18,772	20,000	(5,443)	-	33,329
Community Foundation - HAREF	14,045	17,729	(16,822)	-	14,952
Comfrey Project Engagement	-	2,950	(1,992)	-	958
DATRIG Grant - Newcastle Public Health Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction	-	12,250	(8,389)	-	3,861
UKSPF NOT Volunteering / Social Action	17,981	83,278	(101,011)	-	248
DATRIG Grant - Supported Volunteer Pathway Coordinator Funding	-	20,000	(650)	-	19,350
	<u>339,995</u>	<u>941,911</u>	<u>(1,086,670)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>195,236</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

24 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 October 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 September 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted IT equipment	8,787	-	(3,845)	-	4,942
HAREF (Restricted donations)	24,845	-	(10,653)	2,795	16,987
North of Tyne Volunteer Project	28,514	15,649	(38,100)	-	6,063
Gateshead Infrastructure Support	14,146	174,500	(174,318)	-	14,328
Gateshead Volunteer Centre	20,418	77,499	(82,782)	-	15,135
Newcastle Infrastructure Support	10,121	161,972	(141,073)	-	31,020
Health Bulletin	459	6,583	(6,905)	-	137
Help through Crisis	7,997	36,587	(36,047)	-	8,537
Hate Crime Advocacy Service	3,577	75,502	(75,332)	10,990	14,737
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	-	10,000	(7,574)	-	2,426
NHR Mental Health	96	1,737	(1,607)	(226)	-
Digital Inclusion in Gateshead	60,688	4,000	(10,227)	-	54,461
Social Prescribing in Newcastle	9,168	24,686	(22,374)	-	11,480
Health Equality Mental Health	41,463	100	(24,549)	-	17,014
Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders	-	7,853	(1,181)	(6,672)	-
Small Sparks Plus	3,950	-	-	(3,950)	-
CYP Mental Health and Neurodevelopment	1,746	-	(1,746)	-	-
UKSPF Digital Inclusion	-	48,197	(48,197)	-	-
Gateshead Youth Mental Health	-	75,000	-	-	75,000
Awards For All	-	20,000	(3,070)	-	16,930
Gateshead Council	-	20,000	(1,228)	-	18,772
Community Foundation	-	17,729	(3,684)	-	14,045
NIHR HAREF Covid	2,441	-	-	(2,441)	-
UKSPF NOT Volunteering / Social Action	-	138,171	(120,100)	(90)	17,981
	<u>238,416</u>	<u>915,765</u>	<u>(814,592)</u>	<u>406</u>	<u>339,995</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

24 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Restricted IT equipment

Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

HAREF (Restricted Donation)

An ICB NHS funded project to support engagement with ethnically marginalised communities across Newcastle and Gateshead into health services.

North of Tyne Volunteering Project (VODA)

To create the North of Tyne as a volunteer area of excellence, this is a five year. project.

Gateshead Infrastructure Support

VCSE infrastructure support contract for Gateshead.

Gateshead Volunteer Centre

To establish and run an independent Volunteer Centre for Gateshead.

Newcastle Infrastructure Support

VCSE infrastructure support contract for Newcastle.

Health Bulletin

An NHS ICB funded project On the Hoof health information bulletin.

Help Through Crisis

A National Lottery Community Fund to 'support families through crisis.

Hate Crime Advocacy Services

Providing. Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting-people who have experienced, or .are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area.

Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services.

SAFE Project

Safeguarding Adults for Empowerment (SAFE): A qualitative study to develop best practice for involving older people in adult safeguarding processes.

Housing Advocacy

Advocacy for 16 people with complex housing needs across Newcastle and Gateshead.

Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders - Hate Crime

Advocacy for 10 Newcastle residents experiencing hate crime

Digital Inclusion in Gateshead

An ICB NHS funded project to improve Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care Project in Gateshead.

Social Prescribing in Newcastle

A project for supporting better links between the VCSE and social prescribers in Newcastle and running Health and wellbeing event for the VCSE.

Health Equity Mental Health

An ICB NHS funded project improving VCSE Engagement in the Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead.

Gateshead Youth Mental Health

The NENC ICB provide funds for Connected Voice to administer as grant applications to develop community-based activity which supports children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in Gateshead.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

24 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders

Building community cohesion in Newcastle by bringing together community leaders, VCSE organisations, and public sector partners.

Small Sparks Plus

Funded by Newcastle City Council, the programme aims to distribute micro grants to small and medium, grassroots VCSE organisations in Newcastle to deliver positive health and wellbeing activities in their communities.

CYP Mental Health and Neurodevelopment

Funding for Connected Voice to distribute a grant(s) to a VCSE organisation operating in Newcastle and Gateshead to test out pilot community-based approaches co-designed by young people to supporting neurodivergent young people aged 13–24-year-old.

VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance

NHS ICB funding to build capacity with smaller VCSE organisations across Newcastle and Gateshead to engage in integrated working through the VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance.

UKSPF Digital Inclusion Gateshead

Funding to support constituted groups and charities in Gateshead through tailored approaches, in order to develop their digital infrastructure and capability.

Digital Inclusion Workforce

Funding to upskill VCSE and statutory workforce and volunteers; key focus for engagement is PCN and GP frontline staff re Digital Inclusion.

Awards for All

Funding for Haref to support our work with ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Gateshead, in order to collaborate with health services to improve accessibility.

HAREF Engagement

Funding to support Haref's engagement work in Gateshead with ethnically marginalised communities on health access needs, and ensuring links to key strategic health meetings.

Community Foundation - HAREF

Funding for Haref to support our work with ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Gateshead, in order to collaborate with health services to improve accessibility.

Comfrey Project Engagement

Gateshead Refugee Voices; Gateshead collaboration for improving mental health services for asylum seekers and refugees.

DATRIG Grant - Newcastle Public Health Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction

Funding to provide the safe, independent space and oversight to facilitate, coordinate and set up and deliver five focus groups with ethnically marginalised communities.

UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering

Project to enhance support for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations in Newcastle.

DATRIG Grant - Supported Volunteer Pathway Coordinator Funding

Funded by Newcastle City Council, the purpose of the programme is to support Newcastle residents in recovery of alcohol and drug use move into volunteering opportunities.

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

25 Unrestricted funds - designated

These are unrestricted funds which are material to the charity's activities.

	At 1 October 2024	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 September 2025
	£	£	£	£
Digital Transformation	21,653	-	-	21,653
	<u>21,653</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,653</u>
Previous year:	At 1 October 2023	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 September 2024
	£	£	£	£
Digital Transformation	31,718	(10,065)	-	21,653
HAREF	2,795	-	(2,795)	-
Office move	21,320	(1,817)	(19,503)	-
Advocacy	21,434	(10,442)	(10,992)	-
	<u>77,267</u>	<u>(22,324)</u>	<u>(33,290)</u>	<u>21,653</u>

Digital Transformation

For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes.

HAREF

To extend the ongoing Haref Allies Project It is expected that this fund will be utilised by 30 September 2023.

Office Move

To cover additional costs associated with the office move to One Strawberry Lane. The move took place in January 2023.

Advocacy

Development and restructuring of the advocacy service.

26 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 October 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 30 September 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	365,817	924,971	(830,716)	-	-	460,072
	<u>365,817</u>	<u>924,971</u>	<u>(830,716)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>460,072</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

26 Unrestricted funds (Continued)

	At 1 October 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 30 September 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	425,629	954,550	(1,051,172)	32,884	3,926	365,817

27 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds general 2025 £	Unrestricted funds designated 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
At 30 September 2025:				
Tangible assets	7,653	-	-	7,653
Current assets/(liabilities)	452,419	21,653	195,236	669,308
	<u>460,072</u>	<u>21,653</u>	<u>195,236</u>	<u>676,961</u>
	Unrestricted funds general 2024 £	Unrestricted funds designated 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 30 September 2024:				
Tangible assets	15,399	-	-	15,399
Current assets/(liabilities)	350,418	21,653	339,995	712,066
	<u>365,817</u>	<u>21,653</u>	<u>339,995</u>	<u>727,465</u>

28 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Within one year	33,080	33,080
Between two and five years	115,193	121,273
In over five years	36,000	63,000
	<u>184,273</u>	<u>217,353</u>

**CONNECTED VOICE
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

29 Related party transactions

There were no other disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024: none).

30 Cash generated from operations	2025	2024
	£	£
Deficit for the year	(50,504)	(13,847)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(26,027)	(36,961)
Gain on disposal of investments	-	(3,502)
Fair value gains and losses on investments	-	(424)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	7,746	5,281
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	12,355	(11,610)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	310,130	(303,260)
(Decrease) in creditors	(117,688)	(18,115)
Increase in deferred income	1,178,232	664,821
Cash generated from operations	1,314,244	282,383









2025 Dated financial statements

Final Audit Report

2026-07-03

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