



Annual Review 2021 - 2022

We amplify voices · We champion equality · We inspire change · We support action · We connect people



Bring your
#IdeasToLifeNE



Contents

Chair's Report	4
Connected Voice Support and Development	8
Connected Voice Business Services	9
Connected Voice Haref	10
Connected Voice Volunteering	11
Connected Voice Advocacy	12
Our Thanks	14
Our Awards and Accreditation	15
Income and Expenditure	15

Chair's Report

The 12 months that ended in September 2022 were some of the most challenging for the VCSE Sector in memory. As society emerged in faltering steps from the pandemic, the human cost continued to grow, measured in terms of the harm to mental wellbeing, the dysfunctions of a divided society or the impact of the economic shocks that flowed from Brexit, Covid and the war in Ukraine. In Newcastle and Gateshead, with some of the highest percentages of people living in poverty in the UK, the need for the VCSE Sector was greater than ever. The Sector responded characteristically, doing everything it could, despite an extremely challenging funding environment and it is to the massive credit of everyone who touched the lives of others that they achieved what they did.

The work of Connected Voice over those 12 months is captured in the following pages – and so much of it has made such significant impact to the Sector and the people it serves. I want to devote this Chair's Report, though, to two specific topics: our Staff and our Trustees.

The Staff of Connected Voice have just moved into the wonderful new building at One Strawberry Lane (come & visit, if you haven't already!). Although the building is excellent and we are very grateful to be the tenants of Home Group in it, in one sense the building is entirely irrelevant. Connected Voice isn't an address or a set of offices and meeting rooms – it's simply the sum of all individuals who work in it. In the last 12 months:

- Staff in Support and Development have been at the front line, working with so many in the Sector trying to figure out how to handle increased need at the same time as navigating funding, grants and keeping up to date with training and development.

- Staff in Advocacy have worked with tact and empathy, skill and determination to give a voice to those without one or who might find their voice ignored. Advocacy was recognised nationally in 2022 with the Outstanding Advocacy Award for strategic work on safeguarding and the hate crime advocacy service.
- Staff in Business Services have been at the sharp end of working with organisations trying so hard to make ends meet and navigate the complexities of producing accounts, payroll changes and independent examinations.
- Staff in Haref and Volunteering have been growing their impact, reaching out to communities and harnessing the power of good will – and, as with all their colleagues in the other groups, there just aren't enough hours in the day.

Every person who works for Connected Voice has had the same hopes and fears as everyone else in Newcastle and Gateshead in those 12 months – personal worries about the pandemic and its effects on family, friends and neighbours, alarm at the way that bills started to rise and inflation roared back in a way that we haven't seen in 30 years. I'm glad that Connected Voice, along with others in the Sector, was able to provide some Cost of Living Support to Staff in 2022, making those worries a little less. As a Board we were delighted in August that Connected Voice retained its Investors in People award, because it's the Staff of an organisation who truly tell you if it's an organisation that treats Staff well, enables them to find fulfilment in their work and nurtures a culture in which people can speak up and be listened to. A massive 'thank you' to all the Staff of Connected Voice, for everything.

The Trustees of Connected Voice – at time of writing there are 10 – are a diverse group of people with skills and experiences that aim to reflect the communities that Connected Voice serves. Trustees are supporters, a sounding board, a critical friend – even as they challenge and scrutinise and seek to

comply with the multitude of regulations and responsibilities that go with the role. Volunteering is the theme of our AGM and Trusteeship is a particular form of volunteering, which I want to acknowledge here. The time a Trustee of Connected Voice donates ranges from about 30 hours per year to over 300 hours per year. In the 12 months covered by this report, Connected Voice Trustees have probably donated over 1,000 hours and brought their experience, insight and networks to serve Connected Voice in a way that would have been completely unaffordable otherwise. And they have done that on top of everything else in their day jobs, in their family lives and without pay. For all of that, thank you.

In closing, there are two Trustees I would like to mention in particular. Nitin Shukla left the Board during the year to prevent there being a conflict of interest with his role in tackling Hate Crime within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. Nitin changed the conversation in Connected Voice and about Equity, Diversity & Inclusion as well as bringing his significant experience of governance. Paula Park retires at the AGM in April this year after serving a 3 year term – and her financial acumen, sharp mind and straight talking have been invaluable. Both leave a big gap and I'm glad that through open recruitment we are welcoming new Trustees at the AGM.

Simon Elliott,
Chair, Connected Voice

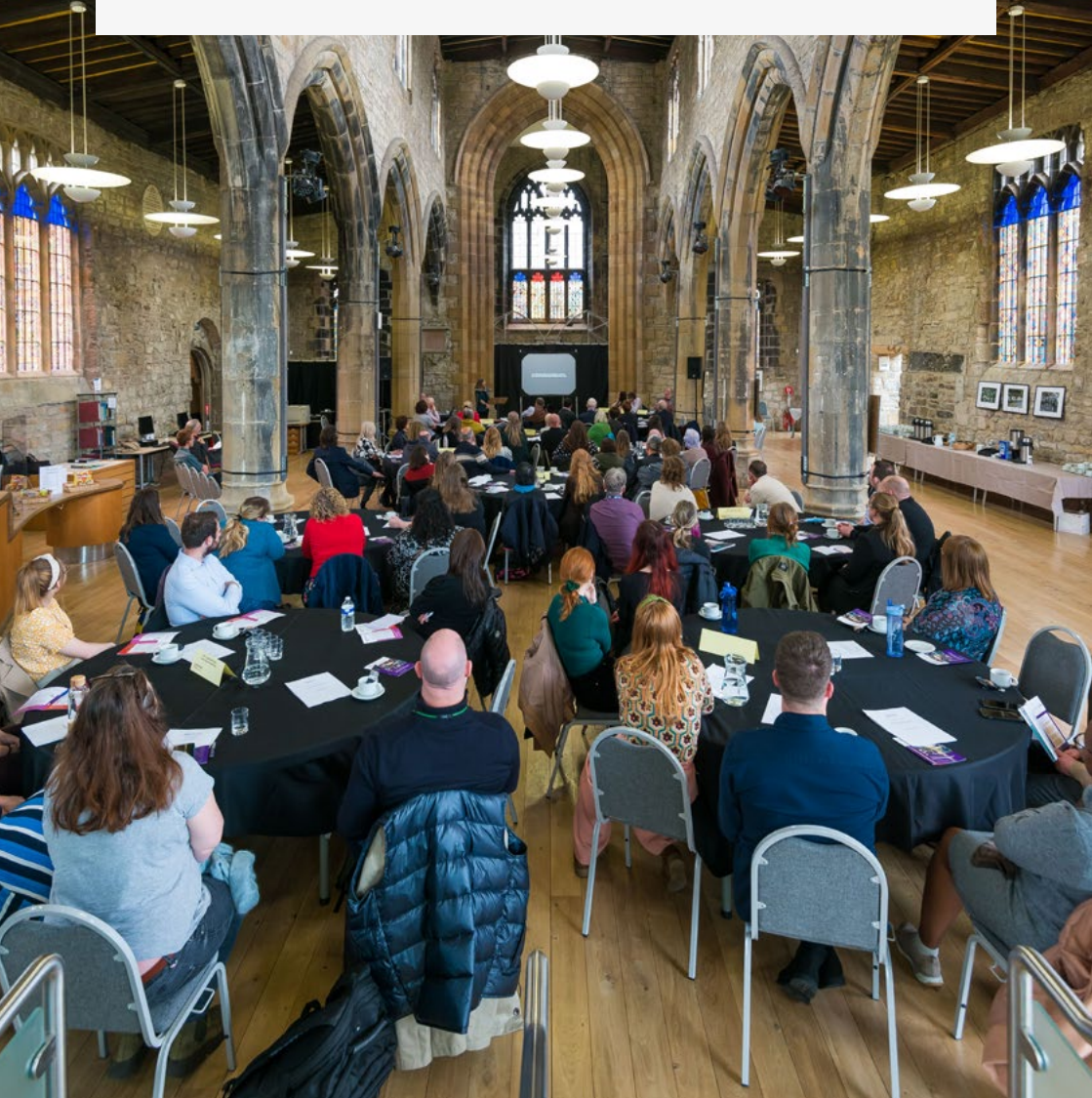
At the heart of community action for 90 years

We amplify voices · We champion equality

We inspire change · We support action · We connect people

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

This Annual Review summaries our key achievements in 2021/2022. Please visit our website to read our full Annual Report: www.connectedvoice.org.uk/about-us/our-impact



In 2021/2022 we:

Supported **274** organisations with governance, funding, legal structures, policies and organisational development

Helped organisations to secure **£945,806** of grant funding

Held **6** networking events attended by **256** delegates

Delivered **72** training sessions

Updated the OurGateshead community website as services opened up again, which led to **202,221** page views



In addition to delivering our services, we:

Secured £285,000 of funding from the NHS to pass directly to VCSE organisations who were struggling because of the cost of living crisis.

Hosted in-person events again, including the Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair with 17 funders and 134 delegates.

Partnered with two other local infrastructure charities to develop an eLearning platform, Elements.

**Connecting charities, social enterprises and
community organisations to guidance and support**



An excellent service in tune with the needs of the sector, flexible, approachable and professional

In 2021/2022 we:

Supported **110** organisations with their payroll

Supported **70** organisations with auto enrolment (pension)

Completed Year End accounts and Independent Examinations for **110** organisations

Provided bookkeeping and management accounts to **10** organisations

Helped **12** organisations switch to a digital financial system



In addition to delivering our services, we:

Issued regular email updates to all clients.

Delivered online training sessions around reading a balance sheet and managing a budget.

Connecting organisations to our specialist charity finance expertise

Payroll · Accounts · Training · Reports



Having Haref Allies is a source of inspiration to us, as well as a way to reinforce our intentions

In 2021/2022 we:

Delivered Cultural Competency sessions to **316** people

Designed Ramadan 'safe fasting' prayer calendars for **11** mosques, and delivered **3,300** printed calendars to be shared in local Muslim communities

Launched a new Haref Allies membership in May 2022 which saw **92** people from **51** organisations join

Grew the Haref Network to **120** people from **70** organisations

Regularly updated **800** subscribers to the Haref bulletin



In addition to delivering our services, we:

Facilitated the Newcastle Gateshead CCG Forums

Supported health information sessions on COVID-19 vaccines, navigating the NHS, advocacy in health and lifesaving skills

Published an NIHR funded peer research report on Health Inequalities in the Age of COVID-19

Hosted an NHS Graduate Management placement

Connecting ethnically minoritised communities and organisations to reduce health inequalities



I would recommend it to anyone looking to spend their time offering charity work

In 2022 we:

Supported **106** people into volunteering opportunities

Worked with **14** VCSE organisations to develop and implement their volunteering policies and procedures

Set up the Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network and grew membership to **30** volunteer professionals

Improved volunteer brokerage on OurGateshead.org, which increased volunteering page views by **405%**

Set up Sector Connector for skilled volunteering with **14** small and medium sized businesses across Newcastle and Gateshead

In addition to delivering our services, we:

Set up 4 community bases from which to run the Gateshead Volunteer Centre

Contributed to the North of Tyne Volunteering project

Delivered a Sector Connector Workshop for 8 people from VCSE organisations



Connecting people and organisations to make a positive difference in communities by volunteering



Far above average.
These are the most
trustworthy, kind and
understanding agency

In 2021/2022 we:

Supported **1,608** people over **20,000** hours

Trained **8** advocates through a national advocacy qualification

Worked with over **40** ethnically minoritised communities and people across **30** languages

Challenged **58** restrictions at the Court of Protection and **29** families in Child Protection hearings

Supported **94** people through safeguarding procedures and **57** people victimised by hate relationships

In addition to delivering our services, we:

Contributed to consultations on, Mental Capacity, Mental Health Acts, LPS Code of Practice and NICE Advocacy guidance

Delivered advocacy training and held positions on decision making boards within the OPCC and Local Authority Safeguarding Boards to ensure provision meets needs of individuals

Mapped advocacy provision for CNTW NHS Trust identifying themes around quality, workforce and networking

Developed a Self-Advocacy Toolkit and improved our Service User Engagement strategy

Collaborated on research with universities on Hate Relationships, Long-term conditions, and the Coronavirus Act

Met gaps in local provision for Refugee & Asylum Seekers and those who identify as LGBTQIA+ or those ethnically minoritised

Free, ethical and independent advocacy

Rights · Choices · Decisions · Actions



Our Thanks

Contracts

- Newcastle City Council
- Newcastle City Council Public Health
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Cumbria Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group
- Police and Crime Commissioner Northumbria
- HMRC Job Retention Scheme

Grants and Donations

- DEFRA Food Grant
- Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland
- NHIR (National Health Institute for Research)
- Innovation Super Network
- Rothley Trust
- Barbour Foundation
- The Joicey Trust
- Sir James Knott Trust
- Mental Health Concern
- Amazon Community-UK
- NAVCA
- Durham University

Funding in partnership with:

- VONNE (The National Lottery Community Fund)
- VODA (The National Lottery Community Fund)
- North East Law Centre (The National Lottery Community Fund)

Lastly, thank you to all the people and organisations who have supported us in the past year, helping us to make a positive difference across the communities of Newcastle and Gateshead.

Our Awards and Accreditation



North East
Better Health
at Work Award
Gold Award



Outstanding Advocacy Service 2022 at the National Advocacy Awards.

Income and Expenditure

Summary of income and expenditure for the 12 month period ended 30 September 2022

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Designated Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total (£)
Income from:				
Generated funds	279,021			279,021
Charitable activities	1,096,797		484,190	1,580,987
Donations	8,531			8,531
Total income	1,384,349		484,190	1,868,539
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	252,129			252,129
Charitable activities	1,063,365	53,802	243,859	1,361,026
Total expenditure	1,315,494	53,802	243,859	1,613,155
Net investment gains	-61,248			-61,248
Transfers between funds				
Net income (expenditure)	7,607	-53,802	240,331	194,136



Find out more

If you would like to find out more about how we can support you, please visit our website or alternatively email or phone us for more information:

Connected Voice
1 Strawberry Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4BX

connect@connectedvoice.org.uk
0191 232 7445



www.ConnectedVoice.org.uk

Connected Voice is a registered charity (number 1125877) and company limited by guarantee (number 6681475) registered in England and Wales. Our registered office is as above.