

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025



vonne.org.uk

STRENGTHENING & SUPPORTING THE SECTOR



Trustees' Annual Report

Year ended March 31st, 2025

The Trustees, who are the directors of the organisation for the purpose of Company Law, present their annual director's report together with the charity's financial statements for the year ended March 31st 2025, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a director's report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, which is applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard that applies in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

Reference and administrative details

Name: Voluntary Organisations' Network North East (VONNE)

Registered Office: Hadrian House, Higham Place, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8AF (until 30th June 2025)
71 Howard Street, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE30 1AF (from 1st July 2025)

Charity Registration Number: 1084083

Company Registration Number: 04061592

Names of the charity trustees at the date this report was approved:

Chair: Alison Dunn

Treasurer: Craig Henderson

Trustees:

Vice Chair: Steven Duckworth*, Michael Fawole***

Angela Brudenell**, Jonathan Carling*, Steven Duckworth*, Alison Dunn, Michael Fawole, Carol Gaskarth**, Cheryl Gavin**, Craig Henderson, Colin Hewitt, Adam Hill, Emma Howitt**, Lawrence McAnelly**, Peter Neal**, Shaun Newton**, Catherine Parker, Kumareswaradas Ramanathas.

*retired 28 November 2024

** appointed 28 November 2024

*** appointed 6 March 2025

Company secretary: Martin Brookes

Key management personnel: Martin Brookes, Chief Executive and Menisha Gela, Deputy Chief Executive (left May 2025)

Bankers: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindley Place, Birmingham B1 2JB

Auditors: BK Plus Audit Limited, Azzurri House, Walsall Road, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0RB

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation, a registered charity, is controlled by its governing document, the Articles of Association and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The VONNE board of trustees has between three and 15 members. Trustees are nominated and elected from the membership. Notice is sent to all members prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM), with each member organisation entitled to vote. Up to six trustees may be appointed by serving trustees for their particular expertise, qualifications and knowledge.

Induction and training of new trustees

New trustees have a full induction delivered by the chief executive and key team members prior to attending their first board meeting. They are provided with an induction pack containing all the key information about VONNE, Charity Commission guidance, role descriptions and other relevant materials.

Organisational structure

VONNE is managed by a board of trustees elected from the membership and governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The board takes all strategic decisions relating to VONNE, including:

- **receiving and reviewing reports from the chief executive and company secretary**
 - **acting as the formal employer of VONNE's staff, ensuring activity and performance is regularly reviewed and evaluated**
 - **monitoring and assessing VONNE's financial position, including budget setting**
 - **developing, reviewing and monitoring VONNE's strategic plan and annual work plan, to influence and direct VONNE's work**
 - **agreeing and reviewing appropriate policies and ensuring VONNE meets its legal responsibilities**
 - **communicating relevant information and views gathered outside VONNE to staff and trustees.**
- There's a finance sub-group that reports to the board on finance, internal policy and human resources issues.**

Risk management

Trustees reviewed the risk register this year and monitor it regularly, with a full review carried out annually. Trustees are confident that risks have been identified, appropriate preventative measures are in place and remedial activities are available. VONNE's financial processes are regularly reviewed, both by the board and externally, to ensure they continue to be robust.

Indemnity insurance

VONNE has professional indemnity insurance cover, in respect of the trustees and officers of the charity.

VONNE'S Mission

To support the development and sustainability of a strong, effective and well governed Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, and promote engagement, involvement and collaboration with the sector as a valued partner.



VONNE's strategic aims

- To be the expert source of knowledge and intelligence on the VCSE sector in the North East with a particular focus on the existing and emerging needs of the people and communities it serves.
- To be a source of information to the VCSE sector on issues that impact upon it.
- To raise the North East sector's profile and be a leading voice for it.
- To support external stakeholders to effectively engage and collaborate with the VCSE community, through effective system change and new approaches.
- To support the North East VCSE sector to be effective, ambitious and enterprising.
- To be an effective and sustainable organisation.

VONNE's values



We strive for
excellence



We value
Transparency



Inclusivity and
fairness



We encourage
learning and
sharing

Public benefit

VONNE's objectives provide benefit to the public in North East England (area of benefit) by promoting and supporting the effectiveness of voluntary and community organisations.

Trustees of VONNE confirm they've read and paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Trustees confirm they've complied with their duties under Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 with regard to public benefit. Having considered the guidance, trustees have concluded that VONNE's work directly supports and strengthens the North East VCSE community with guidance and information and increases its ability to influence policy and practice in the region.

Annual Review

Membership and Core Services

We support the North East VCSE sector to be effective, ambitious and enterprising. We aim to be an effective and sustainable organisation.

VONNE Membership

Our nearly 1,500 members give VONNE a collective voice that enables us to support, promote and advocate for the North East VCSE sector, both regionally and nationally.

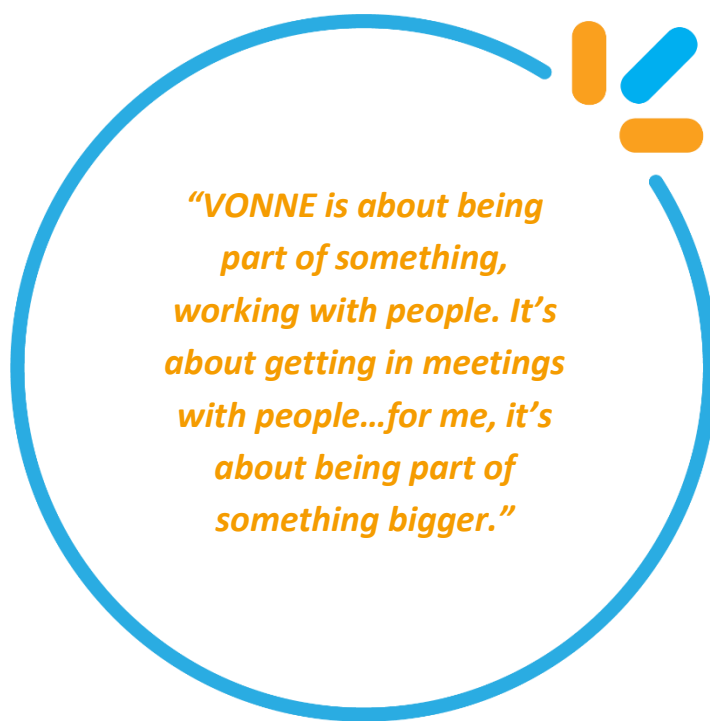
2024-25 saw us moving towards a strategy with a greater emphasis on policy, members and engagement. To understand what that would look like for members, we asked for feedback on our future engagement and [members generously shared their views](#). This feedback will help guide future work.

Over the course of the year, we focussed on bringing member voices more fully into our work. Starting with our support for a [regional response to the summer's racist riots](#) and spotlighting member experiences at our Annual Conference, and continuing with coordination of a [regional response to the NCVO's Civil Society Covenant consultations](#), we worked to put member voices front and centre. [VONNE's report](#) on the impact of the increase to employer National Insurance Contributions on the North East VCSE sector connected member's voices to our policy work. The report attracted the attention of [BBC's Politics North](#) who included interviews with members about their experiences in their piece.

Through our FINE (Funding Information North East) project we continued to provide funding

information and intelligence to our members and networks. FINE's specialist resources were accessed by unlimited users from almost 400 organisations, while intelligence from the project was shared with our wider networks and informed conversations with partners.

Core membership increased by nearly five per cent on the previous year. Membership+ numbers fell slightly. Membership+ gives members access to a range of additional benefits, and Bronze Membership+ is free to organisations with annual income under £50K. Income from fees help us deliver member services and keep access free to the smallest organisations.



"VONNE is about being part of something, working with people. It's about getting in meetings with people...for me, it's about being part of something bigger."



VONNE Job Finder

The recruitment landscape remained challenging in 2024-25, including for our sector and region. Nonetheless Job Finder advertised more than 600 job and trustee vacancies for North East VCSE organisations across the year.

To help our networks manage job market uncertainty, we changed our [Membership+ Salary Review Report](#) into an annual publication, giving members access to recent, relevant intelligence. The report uses data from [Job Finder adverts](#), so gives a unique perspective on salaries and employment trends specific to our sector and region. The insights shared help sector employers set salaries and benefits when recruiting.

We also worked with North East specialists from Nigel Wright Recruitment to host a session on [recruitment and retention in a tricky market](#). Regional Director, Sue Ormerod shared insights on navigating the challenging market to find the best candidates.

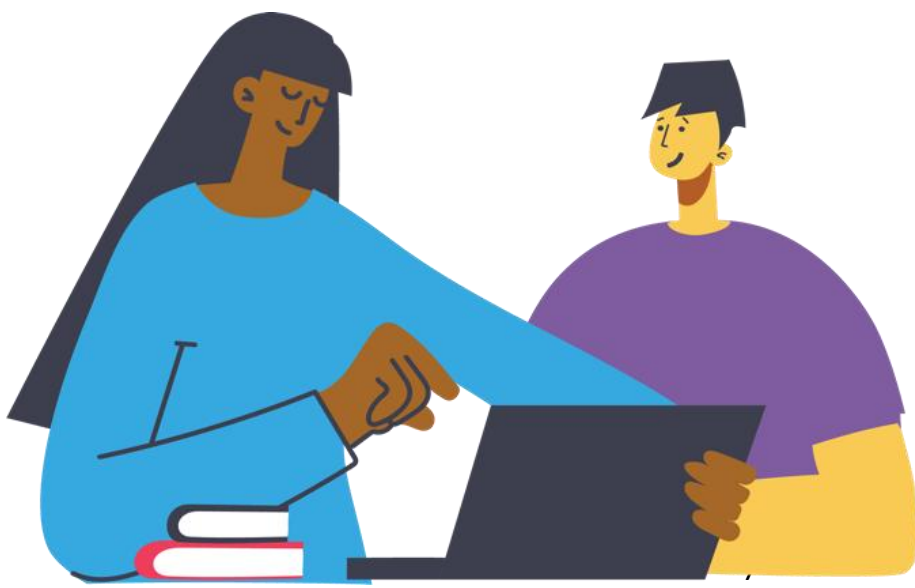
We continued to use Job Finder's platform to encourage good work in the sector, supporting key campaigns such as #WeShowTheSalary and #OpenToAll. As a National Living Wage employer, we also work to encourage sector support for the campaign.



Recruitment Support Service

Our valued Recruitment Support service attracted new and repeat customers in 2024-25. Through the service we help VCSE organisations who lack in-house HR expertise find the right people for their team, taking the stress out of recruitment while making sure processes and paperwork follow HR best practice and comply with legislation.

One small charity said: '...it was important to get the whole process right and for it not to swamp us in terms of responding to queries and promoting the opportunity. Right from the start, it felt like the VONNE team were on top of it'.





1,500
members

Over 80 events held
with over 1,100
registered attendees




Information
and
intelligence
delivered to
over 10,000
subscribers



2024 – 2025
Impact

40% increase
in social
media
followers



Information and Intelligence

We raise the profile of the sector and ensure it is valued as an equal partner. We're an expert source of intelligence on the sector and provide information to the VCSE community on issues that affect it.



Information and intelligence

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Our communication channels

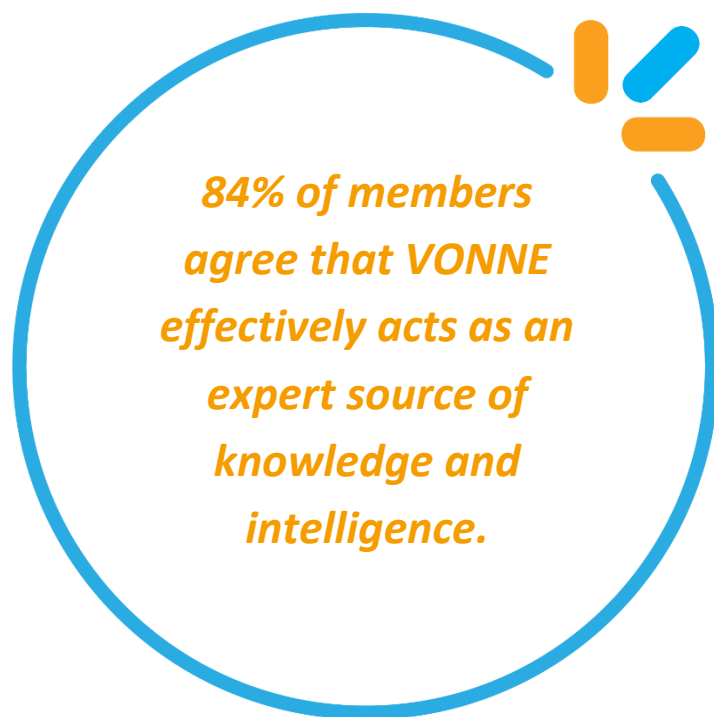
We keep North East VCSE organisations informed about key information through our social media channels and a number of regular eBulletins, including VONNEnews, VONNEJobs, FINE, Health & Wellbeing and a VONNE Members ebulletin.

In 2024/25 our communication developed a more holistic approach, responding to and advocating for the needs of the sector. With the North East Combined Authority (NECA) devolution deal coming to fruition and the inauguration of the North East Mayor, Kim McGuinness, VONNE have used our position within the NECA cabinet to disseminate information within the Combined Authority and to organisations in the VCSE sector.

VONNE created one of our largest communications campaigns in August 2024 when we coordinated a sector wide response to the racist summer riots. VONNE members and charity organisations across the region united in a joint statement published on the VONNE website. Our engagement with the sector around the riots helped to inform and develop our 25th Annual Conference where we focussed on devolution and community cohesion. The conference was the highest attended in-person conference we've held to date with 100% of attendees surveyed saying the event was interesting and insightful.

Later in the year, our campaign around Employer National Insurance Contribution increases gained media attention, with BBC Politics North covering the impact of NIC, interviewing our Chief Executive, Martin and some of our Membership+ members.

We continue to use our communication channels and networks to share information and insights with both our members and the wider sector. Our presence on LinkedIn continues to grow indicating this is an important and valued method of sharing information.



EDI

VONNE continues to develop our EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion) work. We welcomed Michael Fawole as our Board EDI lead, and we commissioned Ngozi Lyn Cole Consultancy to carry out a survey to inform the development of an authentic EDI strategy. VONNE is committed to its EDI work as a means of developing and supporting its workforce to reflect the characteristics and expectations of the community/stakeholders we serve and to be an organisation that is inclusive and empowers every person to contribute their best. Our aim is to be proactive as an organisation, embracing EDI from both a strategic, operational and human perspective.

To date, our EDI working group continues to meet monthly to drive work forward and explore how we can embed EDI into our daily working practices. The EDI Training sub-group have developed an action plan identifying training priorities for the next two years.

“As a charity we benefit from all the information and knowledge that VONNE has... we want the representation, networks and knowledge at a regional level that VONNE can provide so that there's a wider impact for the sector.”

VONNE Membership+ member



Partnership and collaboration



We facilitate networks to strengthen the VCSE sector and act as a 'connector', bringing people and organisations together to make things happen.

We support external stakeholders to effectively engage and collaborate with the VCSE community, through effective system change and new approaches.





Networks

CEO Peer Support Network

A renewed focus on our Gold & Silver CEO Peer Network brought opportunities to hear from members and help them connect. We hosted sessions on diverse topics including working with mayoral combined authorities, community cohesion and HR legal updates, and fed what we learned from sessions into our work supporting and advocating for the sector.

VCSE Skills, Inclusion and Employment Network (NECA area)

The VCSE Skills, Inclusion and Employment Network, hosted by VONNE, has over 290 network members (25 new members in 2025). Network meetings discussed the VCSE sector's role across the employment, skills and health system and how it can influence change. They also included updates and conversations with the North East Combined Authority and Department of Work and Pensions on Inclusive Growth, the Local Growth Plan and consultations on how the combined authority and other commissioners might better design and administer their investments.



North East Child Poverty Commission

As members of the North East Child Poverty Commission, we have continued to work with other members, VCSE organisations and other regional bodies to demand urgent government action to address the levels of child poverty in the region.

LIO Network

We support networks of Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIOs) across the region, bringing them together both to facilitate joint working, and to disseminate relevant policy information from VONNE to their grassroots member groups.



Partnership Projects

Continuing partnership projects include:

- **Local Access Redcar & Cleveland and Hartlepool (LARCH)**

Building the social economy in these places through enterprise development activities and access to blended social investment.

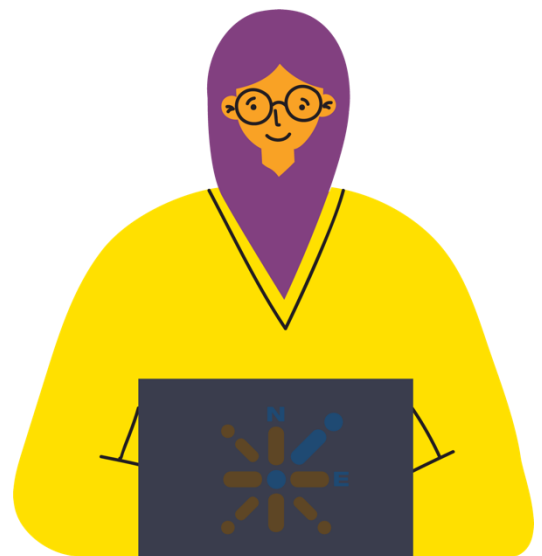
In August 2024, the Programme Manager left to take up a new role and the first round of recruitment to fill this role was unsuccessful. The role was eventually filled by Nicola Wylde in January 2025. In the interim, delivery of the programme was dramatically reduced with a consultant, in a client facing capacity, on a one day a week contract.

Since January 2025 there have been changes made to the processes of LARCH (as a result of the Governance and Operational Review in 2024) to make the application process more efficient and to make decision making more transparent. We are currently conducting a skills audit of the LARCH management board to identify any skills gaps.

The new role of Social Enterprise Development Officer within the LARCH team was created in the spring of 2025 and Stephen Goodall was successfully appointed in June. He is making good progress in tidying up the LARCH pipeline, reconnecting with clients and supporting them in making applications to LARCH and signposting to KeyFund where appropriate.

As part of our monitoring, evaluation and learning we are building a collection of case studies to showcase how LARCH intervention has impacted organisations. We will be launching a client survey in September to gather quantitative data. Results of both will help us shape the future of the programme as well as provide us with stories for promotion.

A LARCH celebration event is being planned for Spring 2026 at F.R.O.G (a LARCH client) where we will be bringing together clients, stakeholders and partners to showcase the support that LARCH has given so far, to grow the understanding of social enterprise/finance in the area and to develop the peer-to-peer network. This will play a part in laying the foundations for the legacy of LARCH.



- **Going Green Together**

Going Green Together supports VCSE organisations to become more environmentally sustainable and engage in climate action. Following the success of the pilot, further funding was secured from the National Lottery Community Funds – Reaching Communities North East and Cumbria, and Point North to deliver phase 2 of the programme from June 2024 through to June 2027.

In September 2024, the project coordinator left to take up a new role and the first round of recruitment for the new project officer was also unsuccessful. A decision was therefore made to pause delivery of the project which was discussed and agreed with our funders. While outward

facing delivery was paused, work continued on the redesign of the website and development of the new structured sustainability pathway, led by the DCEO and communications manager. The latter is a key element of the new support offer for members that sign-up to receive support, enabling them to self-guide their way through a series of steps, actions and activities to support them on their environmental sustainability journey.

Following several rounds of recruitment, the new project officer and project coordinator started in post in March and May respectively. Work has begun in earnest to relaunch the project with a series of in-person and online events scheduled for July, alongside the launch of the redeveloped website and new sustainability pathway. Direct support for VCSE organisations will begin in quarter 2 of 2025/26.

“The training and guidance we have received so far has been invaluable... the knowledge we have gained will vastly change the way we look at our impact, and I can't recommend the programme enough.”

Going Green Together phase 1 participant



Health and Wellbeing

- **VCSE Partnership Programme**

The VCSE Partnership Programme is the VCSE alliance for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, bringing together the VCSE sector in a structured manner as an integral part of the health system. It hosts a growing Health and Wellbeing Network, sharing information via a 3-weekly Health and Wellbeing bulletin, with membership increasing from 847 to 960 from April 2024 to March 2025 (+13.3%). Partnership Forum meetings are held bi-monthly for senior VCSE managers responsible for organisational health policy and strategy. The forum hosts a variety of guest speakers including, Dan Jackson, Director of Policy, Public Affairs and Stakeholder Affairs, NENC ICB; Kerry McQuade, Director of Strategy, Planning and Transformation, North East Ambulance Service and Andrew Hodge, Director of Paramedicine and Allied Health Professionals, NEAS; Rachel Rooney, Deputy Director, Medical Directorate, NENC ICB and Siobhan Brown, Director of Transformation System Wide, NENC Integrated Care Board (ICB). The members act as a representative group with whom external stakeholders can engage. The Partnership Programme hosts 10 thematic networks to enable cross-ICS subject-specific working and collective VCSE input into NHS workstreams and clinical networks, supporting increased awareness of VCSE activity,

increased opportunities for in- and cross-sector working, and greater VCSE influence within the health system.

We have seen increasing VCSE representation at a strategic level within the ICS, with new digital, carers, and workforce representatives supported through the VCSE Partnership Programme. This has been possible through supporting the development of coordinated relationships with NHS workstreams and continuing to work with the ICB to create links into the programme networks. We currently have 13 VCSE representatives' spaces at different workstreams or NHS/ICB-specific meetings.

- **Partnership Programme key events/work**

On Monday, February 5th, the [VCSE Partnership Programme](#) hosted an online '[Change NHS](#)' Engagement Workshop on behalf of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB). Following the event, a report was produced and shared with the ICB, highlighting the key priorities and concerns raised by the VCSE sector. [Read the full report here](#). Content from the report was also included in the ICB's own submission to Change NHS.

Recommendations from our VCSE Temperature Check Survey have been adopted in the Integrated Care Board's '[VCSE Stocktake report](#)', including a commitment to full cost recovery for services commissioned by health.

The Programme Director was a member of a national planning group to set up a new group of VCSE alliance leads, called ALLiance42, supported by NAVCA, to promote the inclusion of VCSE alliance input into national strategic health planning, and is now the North East, North Cumbria and Yorkshire regional lead with a one-year workplan including the ambition to directly influence government policy.

Influence at ICB board level has increased, with the Programme Director, who is the NENC ICB VCSE representative, actively contributing to board meetings and supporting the inclusion of the VCSE sector in strategic workplans, supporting the sector to be considered as an integral system partner.

- **Assura**

We secured £75,000 through Assura plc and Cheshire Community Foundation, to [co-design metrics for VCSE commissioning](#), helping to better evidence the impact of VCSE services in health and care pathways. This enabled us to recruit a new Coordinator from March 2025 to lead the work. The NENC ICB is our project partner and has committed to using the commissioning framework which will be co-created between the VCSE sector and the ICB as part of this work. A large portion of this funding will be funnelled out to the VCSE sector to pay for their contribution to this work. National interest has been expressed in this work from across the country, from both Integrated Care Systems and VCSE organisations.

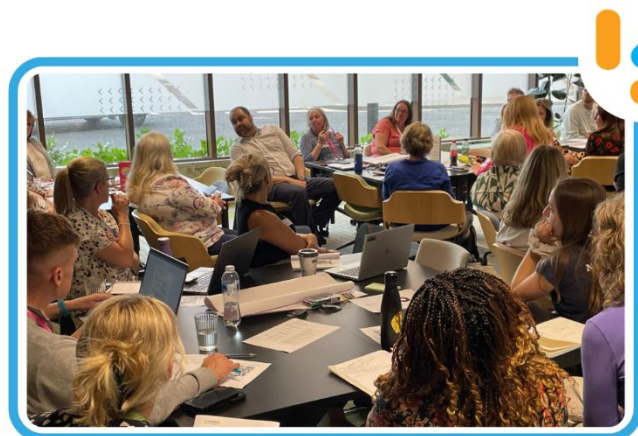
- **North East Ambulance Service (NEAS)**

NEAS partnered with VONNE to harness the strengths of the VCSE sector in engaging communities often overlooked by statutory services. Through dedicated funding and VONNE's extensive regional networks - including the VCSE Partnership Programme - this collaboration enabled trusted VCSE organisations to gather valuable insights from communities of interest. A joint initiative with Healthwatch further expanded the reach, resulting in 2,378 public responses and 65 direct submissions from VCSE organisations. This extensive engagement is shaping NEAS's new organisational strategy, ensuring community voices inform service delivery and strengthening

future collaboration with the voluntary sector. NEAS have shared publicly their appreciation of the work VONNE has done to support the success of this project. Overall funding was £200,000, with £120,000 of this going to VCSE organisations (including VONNE's project coordination).

- **Research Partnerships**

The research partnerships aspect of Health and Wellbeing continues to grow, with interest in the Research Partnerships Coordinator role remaining high across both VCSE and research sectors, with several partnerships developed including with Durham University Medical Humanities Faculty, and the Mental Health Research Leadership Award.



- **Research Engagement Network (REN)**

We have continued the Research Engagement Network project with health and research colleagues, with an additional £80,000 investment to support development of the Children and Young People's Health Research Network, with a large portion allocated to VCSE organisations' input into this work.

- **Community Engagement Toolkit**

We received a £40,000 grant from the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination to co-produce resources to support meaningful research partnerships between VCSE organisations and researchers. 4 co-production workshops took place across the North East North Cumbria to develop three new resources to help apply the principles of the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#) in practice.

- **NorthHFutures**

We have developed a strong and positive partnership with the NorthHFutures team, to ensure the needs of communities are at the heart of health-tech research and innovation. We have met with the team to advise on approaches to best reach the VCSE sector and attended workshops to bring the voice of the sector to these spaces, and sit on the project directorate to ensure the VCSE sector is embedded at the heart of their work.

- **Research Partnerships**

We have continued to deliver our Research Partnerships support, which has included delivering 2 training sessions on 'What is the VCSE sector?' to research colleagues, providing one-to-one support to researchers looking to work with the VCSE sector, and supporting VCSE organisations to become more research ready. Our coordinator left in September and although we had hoped to recruit immediately, complexities within the funders' organisations meant that we were not able to move ahead with this until January, with the new coordinator due to start in post in April 2025. The Health and Wellbeing team flexed to ensure work continued within this area during the period where we did



not have a coordinator, which strengthened relationships with the 8 different funding organisations.

- **Healthy Communities and Social Prescribing**

VONNE also operates as the lead for health inequalities work as part of the ICB's 'Healthier & Fairer' programme. Through our 'Healthy Communities and Social Prescribing' programme, we secured an ICB grant of £300,000 and this enabled us to invest in 13 infrastructure projects across our region, strengthening resilience and building capacity in social prescribing systems. We were also able to fund five partnership projects to support health champion schemes, delivering fantastic benefits to marginalised communities in key health priorities such as Cardio-Vascular Disease, Children's oral health and mental health support.

Over the year, our Healthy Communities and Social Prescribing network has grown from 346 to 441, with members receiving regular updates, webinars and in-person workshops.

Working with senior partners from the ICB and Public Health teams, we contributed to a detailed prioritisation exercise to inform future funding for all Healthier & Fairer programmes.

“Great to get so many perspectives and bring together so much knowledge.”

Social Prescribing event participant





FINANCIAL REVIEW

The 2024/25 financial year for VONNE was challenging with a reduction (45%) on project income, and an increase (12%) on expenditure. This was in part due to our continuation of project development and funding for our work where we received funding in the previous financial year. Despite this, VONNE remains in a strong cash position, with cash balances increasing by 65% (from £674,108 to £1,114,896), driven by the timing of project expenditure versus cash receipts and settlement of prior-year debtor balances.

Debtors reduced significantly by 95% (from £1,256,707 to £57,001), primarily due to the collection of outstanding grant claims and contract income from 2023/24. VONNE reports net assets of £1,067,842, confirming the organisation's continued financial sustainability. Better fund management and an increase in interest rates meant we earned 80% more interest on our cash balances than the previous year.

Multiple funders renewed their support for VONNE during the year including LARCH and Going Green Together, and VONNE secured new projects such as the North Futures Digital Health Hub and Assura, demonstrating continued trust in VONNE's expertise. Unrestricted income remained stable with continuing support from key funders including the Millfield House Foundation and Sir James Knott Trust, supplemented by sales and membership income.

The year ended with Unrestricted reserves of £74,961 and Designated Funds of £90,392.

Restricted funds ended the year with a balance of £902,489 with projects spending a net total of £600,114. This included previous years funding on several projects and expenditure on continuation funded projects. As a result, the restricted funds balance reduced from £1,502,603 to £902,489.

We transferred some designated funds consistent with our objectives and against allocations made towards the end of the previous financial year. The trustees have prepared a forecast for 2025-26 to consider the potential impact on VONNE of possible scenarios on funding, alongside measures that can be taken to mitigate this. Based on these assessments and the current reserves position, the trustees have concluded they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and financial statements.



Reserves policy

VONNE believes it's important to maintain a reserves policy to ensure effective resource management, and to enable financial viability and longer-term sustainability. Four key elements have been taken into consideration to assess a realistic reserve level. These are:

- The reliability of current income sources and new income opportunities
- Expenditure on planned activities
- Future needs, contingencies and risks
- Consequences of being unable to meet forecast needs.

VONNE has no endowment funding and has no significant capital assets it could earn from, or dispose of, to realise additional income. Significant levels of activity are funded through grants or contracts from the public and charitable sectors, but these resources are generally time-limited and usually restricted by the funder. Uncertainties are compounded by the ongoing economic impact of the cost-of-living crisis/high inflation levels on VCSE sector organisations and wider political instability. In addition, the board considers there to be a higher level of uncertainty around funding and income streams for infrastructure organisations. Consequently, a conservative reserves policy is considered the most appropriate.

The VONNE Board uses a continual process of careful financial management, and will aim to review, establish and maintain adequate reserves to enable the organisation to function effectively. A cautious approach to investment is adopted, maximising income by using interest-earning, short-term, accessible bank accounts.

Annually, the Board will review the amount of funds designated for specific purposes, such as maternity and sickness salary cover, redundancy liability, and organisational development funds (outlined in full below). In addition, the board agrees to hold general unrestricted reserves to cover organisational running costs for between 6 and 12 months, with a target of 9 months, to continue VONNE's activities should anticipated income is not received.



Designated funds

The current total amount of funds designated for specific purposes is £90,392 (see below for further detail). Over and above this, VONNE holds a total of £74,961 in general unrestricted reserves, which would be sufficient to continue VONNE's core activities for 4 months should anticipated income is not received.

Since core costs change from year to year and have such an influence over the total level of reserves required, all elements of this policy will be reviewed bi-annually each June and December, or more frequently if requested by the board.

The trustees wish to allocate the unrestricted closing reserve level of £165,353 in the following manner:

Project development and innovation fund A project development fund to support new initiatives and unforeseen project activities to strengthen the VCSE sector in the North East or the sustainability of VONNE.	£10,000
Repair and renewals fund To meet the ongoing costs of repairing and replacing capital equipment, and in particular, IT equipment.	£2,500
Staff contingencies and liabilities fund To meet unexpected staffing costs related to parental leave, sickness leave and other periods of absence and to cover current redundancy liability for individuals whose posts may be lost during a restructure, or as a result of funding streams coming to an end. Redundancy costs are calculated on the basis of current weekly pay.	£61,958
Website Development Fund To meet the costs of the new website build in 2022/23 to provide better content, useability and customer service for our members and the wider VCSE sector. These costs will be amortised over the following 3 years.	£15,934
TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS	£90,392
Unrestricted (free) reserves	£74,961



Statement of trustees' responsibilities

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

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).

Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.



In preparing these statements, trustees are required to:

- **select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently**
- **observe the methods and principles in the charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)**
- **make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent**
- **prepare financial statements on an ongoing concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.**

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company, to enable them to ensure the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- **there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware;**
- **and the trustees have taken all steps they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.**

Auditors

The auditors BK Plus Audit Limited will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

Alison Dunn (Chair)

Thank you!

Thank you to all of our funders, partners, collaborators, colleagues and most of all our members.

2024/2025 VONNE funders:

22 North Foundation	 ACCESS The Foundation for Social Investment	THE Barbour FOUNDATION	BIG SOCIETY CAPITAL
CHESHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	 Community Foundation North East	CATAPULT Digital	 European Union European Regional Development Fund
HADRIAN TRUST	 Millfield House Foundation	 COMMUNITY FUND	NHS North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
NHS North East and North Cumbria	 Newcastle University	NIHR National Institute for Health and Care Research NorthHFutures	NHS England
NE North East Combined Authority	point north	R.W.MANN TRUST	The Rothley Trust
 SIR JAMES KNOTT TRUST	The Joicey Trust	 VCS Emergencies Partnership	 MONEY FOUNDATION



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