



The Elders Council of Newcastle

Annual Report & Accounts 2024/25



Photo Jack Foster

Foreword by the Chair of the Elders



On behalf of the Board of Trustees I am once again delighted to share with you the Annual Report of the Elders Council.

The Elders Council has managed to sustain the core work over the last 12 months despite volunteer and staff changes. Remaining staff and key volunteers have worked continuously to ensure that our statutory responsibilities have been carried out, kept in touch with our members and continued to deliver the valued work of the organisation through our Communications programme.

Members and supporters continue to be informed through our quarterly magazine The Echo, twice a month e-bulletins and the twice a month radio programme Older Voices.

The Research and Impact group have led the Health, Housing and Social Care work, ensuring that the Trustees are up to date with older persons' issues.

Successful funding enabled us to support older people to become more active and creative and we have been informed of local and national issues to share with our peers.

In this Report you will find the Annual Accounts, which have been audited and approved. Our financial position has been and continues to be regularly and carefully monitored by our Treasurer and the rest of the Finance & Funding Committee.

Volunteers are at the heart of the organisation and enable us to achieve our mission to provide older people with a voice. Through performance, Elders Council members developed a piece call Spirit of Rebellion which you will see and hear during our AGM.

Newcastle City Council have signed up in 2025 to become a Marmot City to develop a city that is a good place to grow old in. This aligns with our ethos and the Elders Council has indicated we want to be involved in this work.

This coming year will be the 25th anniversary of the Elders Council and we hope that you, our members, will join our celebrations in any way that you can, highlighted by the AGM in 2026.

We very much look forward to future opportunities to meet up with you all. to hear your stories and ideas and to continue our work to make Newcastle a great place for older people to live out their later years.

Anne Raffle

Thank You

Thanks go to **Clare Levi**, Executive Officer, who left to take up a role in Public Health with Newcastle City Council. Clare continues to support EC and the Age Friendly City work.

Trustee **Nadeem Ahmad** stepped down from the Board. We thank him for his contribution.

On behalf of EC members, I would like to thank our **Board of Trustees & staff members** for their commitment to the Elders Council in general, and continued support to myself.

Statistics

Research and Impact Group:

Since July 2024-June 2025, we have 12 members and we have heard from 12 guest speakers.

Ageing with Purpose:

The AwP cohort had 7 members, 1 is now a trustee, 1 is continuing creative writing from Hong Kong, 4 attended digital skills sessions, and 5 are part of the newly formed Social Media Group.

Digital Skills Sessions:

We had 6 members attend digital skills workshops, facilitated by Ability Net.

Older Voices:

The 300th Older Voices broadcast was in September 2024.

Our Year in Numbers

104
e-bulletins
sent to 879
recipients

12
Talks to 12
Members of the
Research and
Impact group

9
Board
Meetings.

50
Older Voices
broadcasts

171
Members gift
aided
donations

4
Issues of
Echo
Magazine
published

1307
Elders
Council
members

798
Echos emailed
& 580 posted
to members

11
Volunteers
helping on
mailing days

1
Jesmond
festival event

12
Wellbeing for
Life Sessions
(at Jesmond)

SPOTLIGHT

The House of Evergreen Arts

The House of Evergreen Arts began as a simple idea, to create space for older Chinese residents in Newcastle to explore their creativity and share their stories. With support from the Newcastle Arts Development Team, workshops in tie-dye, embroidery, and upcycling brought people together to learn, chat, and create using traditional Chinese techniques.

Held at the Chinese Cultural Centre in Monument ward, the project quickly grew into a welcoming place where people of different ages connected through art and culture. It all came together in two joyful exhibitions during Chinese New Year 2025 at the North East Chinese Association.

Thanks to the talents and voices of the older Chinese residents which were celebrated with pride and shared with the wider community.

Social Impact of the Elders Council

This year, with funding from the Vivensa Foundation (formerly Dunhill Medical Trust), and support from consultants, Elders Council staff and the Research & Impact Group (RIG) have gathered important insights into the impact of our work, connected to our core pillars:

- Connect: Increased member friendships, support networks, and stronger community ties.
- Activate: Greater confidence, renewed sense of purpose, and improved ability to plan for ageing.
- Influence: Enhanced capacity to challenge ageism, feel valued, and contribute meaningfully to society.

These outputs demonstrate positive change in members' lives and provide valuable guidance to strengthen our efforts toward building an age-friendly Newcastle.

Our Voices Were Heard – A Community Theatre Project (also known as Spirit of Rebellion)



The Elders Council worked with Unfolding Theatre on Our Voices Were Heard – a powerful community theatre project that put older people at the heart of the creative process.

Through workshops in Kenton and Fawdon, a group of older residents explored themes like ageism, protest, and rebellion. Inspired by the punk spirit of the 1970s, they used theatre to speak up, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate later life.

The result was a bold, moving performance at Newcastle City Library, co-created and performed by the group. The project built on the success of *Just Us* and earlier community work, and showed how creativity and connection can drive change. Older people helped design the project from the start, making sure it reflected their ideas, experiences, and priorities for an age-friendly Newcastle.

The Research and Impact Group (RIG)

The RIG have held monthly meetings throughout the year, and they have had guest researchers from both Northumbria and Newcastle University, Citizens Advice, and other key stakeholders. These meetings bring members who have a special interest in research together and provides a forum for the group to discuss the importance and impact of research that benefits older adults within the city.

The group also has an ad-hoc 'Task and Finish' group which meet when further input is needed for a particular research topic. They continue to represent and advocate for the needs of older adults and they are looking forward to the year ahead.

Ageing with Purpose Cohort (AwP)

The AwP group attended an eight week course from January-March 2025.

This course was designed to offer the members involved an insight into volunteering at the Elders Council, whilst also developing key professional skills. The group had the opportunity to record a podcast via Zoom detailing their experiences on the programme, produce creative materials through tailored workshops, and attend various placements with other EC groups, such as Older Voices.

Some of the group are now part of the newly formed Social Media Group, and they continue to involve themselves in the work of the EC in various capacities.

Thanks to our Sponsors

The Elders Council wish to thank Newcastle City Council, Community Foundation (North East), Vivensa Foundation (formerly Dunhill Medical Trust), Barchester Charitable Foundation, The Kellett Fund and Monument Ward.

We truly appreciate all support and financial contributions.

ELDERS COUNCIL

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024	+/-
Total Income	£121,874	£88,376	+£33,498
Total expenditure	£119,786	£113,528	+£6,258
Surplus (deficit)	£2,089	£(25,152)	+£27,241
No. of employees [fte]	2.5	2.5	Unchanged
Free reserves	£28,302	£69,295	-£40,993
The number of weeks we could continue to operate if our income completely ceased	12	32	-20

It's tempting to look at these results in isolation and conclude that our fortunes were revived in 2024/25. However, we should bear in mind that these figures include income of over £7,000 from a crowdfunding initiative that kept our magazine publication going. Whilst we are, of course, very grateful to all those who donated, the reality is that this was a one-off and will not be repeated in the coming year. Nevertheless, the outcome is a great improvement on that of the previous year albeit our free reserves have fallen behind target.

The City Council continues to provide us with much needed financial support and we have managed to source funds from a number of other organisations, a list of which is included in notes 7 and 23 of the financial statements. Our thanks go to them all. The various activities that this funding has facilitated are set out in the Chair's Report and amply demonstrate the variety of areas in which we exert our influence and fulfil our public benefit criterion. In the coming year, we will get the results of an independent review of our activities that we confidently expect will demonstrate the impact that we achieve.

Our active members are ably supported by our staff which, though small in number, makes a vital contribution and the Board continues to provide strategic guidance as well as hands-on assistance. We have a relatively strong Balance Sheet to carry forward into 2025/26 and we have a Finance & Funding sub-committee that regularly monitors our finances and reports to the Board, accordingly. The challenge we face is to balance our limited resources (active members, staff and funding) against the need to ensure that we continue to remain relevant and involved.

Reserves

Our reserves target is to have 6-months of operating costs in hand. In these times of ever-increasing calls on the charitable sector and ever-diminishing funding availability the Board is agreed that this remains an appropriate policy. At 31 March 2025 we were short of our target and efforts will be made in the coming year to improve that.

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE LIMITED

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

For the year ended 31 March 2025

I report on the financial statements of the Elders Council of Newcastle Limited for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 10 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2022 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charities Commission (under section 145 (5)(b) of the Charities Act) and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

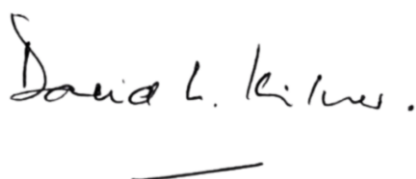
My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



David L. Kilner FCA
Chartered Accountant

7 Eldon Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7JG
Date: 14th July 2025.

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(INCLUDING SUMMARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	6	2,945	7,172	10,117	3,425
Charitable activities					
Grants and contracts	7	53,838	42,852	96,690	73,620
Other trading activities	8	9,074	-	9,074	2,590
Investments	9	-	-	-	1,691
Other income	10	5,994	-	5,994	7,050
Total income		71,850	50,024	121,874	88,376
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	11	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities					
Operation of the charity	11	113,365	6,421	119,786	113,528
Total expenditure		113,365	6,421	119,786	113,528
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement of funds		(41,514)	43,603	2,089	(25,152)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		70,396	8,802	79,198	104,350
Total funds carried forward		28,882	52,405	81,287	79,198

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

THE ELDERS COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE LIMITED
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Charity Number 1122424
Company Number 06188907

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 March 2025

	Notes	£	Total 2025 £	£	Total 2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	18		580		1,101
Total fixed assets			580		1,101
Current assets					
Debtors	19	663		2,010	
Cash at bank and in hand	20	90,578		118,164	
Total current assets		91,241		120,174	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	(10,534)		(42,077)	
Net current assets			80,707		78,097
Total assets less current liabilities			81,287		79,198
Total net assets or liabilities			81,287		79,198
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted income funds			28,882		70,396
Restricted income funds			52,405		8,802
Total funds			81,287		79,198

The company was entitled to an exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with the respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on: 18 June 2025
and are signed on its behalf by:



Keith Williamson,
Trustee



Elders Council of Newcastle

Registered Charity No. 1122424

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