



The NeuroMuscular Centre

SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

2022-2023

Including Annual report
and financial statements



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AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR

SOCIAL ACCOUNTS



Our Social Accounts seek to show the impact of our work during the last year.

We are a charity. We are proud to be a charity and part of a sector that is so key to a thriving society. Sometimes people's perception of 'charity' doesn't match the ethos and culture that we support.

Our collective focus is on what each of us can do.

We're not exclusive or cliquy. We don't impose structures or prescribed ways in which people interact with us. We don't pretend to know best. We try our best to listen and respond using the resources of the charity to enable the things that people most want.

We are proud of NMC and the things we do but we are humble too. We do not pretend to have all the answers or know all that there is to know.

As one person said in our survey in 2021



THE NMC FOCUS
ON ME AS A HUMAN, NOT
A SET OF PROBLEMS



NMC'S PURPOSE



NMC is dedicated to enriching the lives of people living with, and affected by, neuromuscular conditions.



We enhance wellbeing through emotional, physical, learning, training, and social opportunities.

Development of the NeuroMuscular Centre

NMC is now in its 33rd year of providing a unique combination of life enhancing opportunities and support for people affected by neuromuscular conditions including, muscular dystrophy.

The NMC was “born” in 1990 out of a dearth of services and opportunities for (mainly young) adults with neuromuscular conditions and family’s fears of “dropping off a cliff” in terms of service and support.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

1

PROVIDE IMPACTFUL SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

2

ENRICH THE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY NEUROMUSCULAR CONDITIONS

3

INSPIRE, INFORM AND ENABLE OUR COMMUNITY TO MAKE AN ACTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

4

DEVELOP A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND RESPOND IN TAILORED WAYS

5

RUN AN EFFECTIVE AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION WITH EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CORE

6

INCREASE AWARENESS OF MD AND NMC AND INCREASE OUR INFLUENCE

Development of the NeuroMuscular Centre...

It was a determination to “plug that gap” combined with an equal determination to enable fulfilling and productive lives for those living with these disabling conditions that led to the foundation of NMC.

This new independent charity began to offer specialist Physiotherapy services on a very small scale, funded initially by one of the first Comic Relief Grants. Demand for services grew steadily and so too did NMC’s resources.

NMC – THE IMPACT OF WHAT WE DO

The reason that we produce a set of Social Accounts is to capture, analyse, demonstrate, and evaluate our impact as an organisation.

We seek to establish the impact of our year’s work on people’s lives, on our local community, on the environment and the economy.

Each year we set about establishing the impact through different lenses and using ever changing methods and means. It is never perfect! We do our best, but we are not purists. We try to take a series of “slices” through our work and our community and seek to establish how NMC has impacted on people’s health, feelings, relationships and much more.

Throughout the year we seek to keep good records of any evidence or feedback that people give us about how we may have impacted on their life. In our Social Accounts we try to pull all that information together and present it in a readable and structured way.

Big Survey 2023

We also carried out a “Big Survey 2023” which asked people to rate the impact that NMC had in relation to a wide range of aspects of life.

179 people which is the most responses we have ever had from the NMC community to an annual impact survey. This year it was notable that 60 people completed the online version of the survey.

This was a significant increase in online participation. In previous years this number had always been below 20. This online response has definitely enabled more of those with very limited dexterity/hand strength to participate. In previous years we had noted that as a challenge. The form was available in paper form at the Centre, online via the “closed” NMC community Facebook page



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19% 

OF RESPONDENTS FROM FAMILY MEMBER OR
FRIENDS OF SOMEONE ATTENDING WITH A
NEUROMUSCULAR CONDITION

150 WITH NEUROMUSCULAR
CONDITIONS WERE SEEN
FOR THE FIRST TIME AT
PEOPLE NMC DURING 2022-23

and emailed to people on request. It was also promoted via the Physio patient SMS text system. Of all respondents to our survey, 19% were from members of our community identifying as 'a family member or friend' of someone attending with a Neuromuscular condition. To give a sense of the representative sample that the survey provides, our community comprises about 650 individuals with neuromuscular conditions and their families. 150 people with neuromuscular conditions were seen for the first time at NMC during the 2022-23 year.

Many hundreds of comments and thoughts were shared in the completion of this survey and some of those are woven into the text of the Social Accounts. There are also some case studies highlighting lived experiences included in these Social Accounts. We hope these provide a bit more context and a greater understanding of NMC's impact.

Impact is not about how much physio someone has, or how often they come into the Centre, or how much time they spend socialising here. We know that very often one brief phone conversation, or a chance meeting, can have a significant impact and transform someone's outlook.

Living with long term genetic and inherited muscle conditions can lead to people feeling very alone. There's often little expertise amongst those people in health and social care jobs who are often those who people turn to when they need some help. And where people do access help and support from these statutory agencies, the interactions can often feel quite mechanical. We hope and aspire to provide warmer, more thoughtful, more informal interactions at NMC.



WHAT ASPECTS OF IMPACT DO WE TRY TO MEASURE?

It would be impossible to measure every element of our impact.

We also seek to measure our impact as an organisation on the local economy, our local community and on the environment.

This approach to measuring impact is ambitious and often daunting. We have a confidence to complete the Social Accounts process that comes from having produced Social Accounts for the last 16 years.

This year we focus on measuring our NMC IMPACT on the following

Impact on relationships and family life (strategic aim 2)

Impact on level of confidence (strategic aim 3)

Impact on health and fitness (strategic aim 2)

Impact on friendship and leisure (strategic aim 1)

Impact on sense of purpose (strategic aim 3)

Impact on education and employment (strategic aim 1)

Impact on being positive (strategic aim 3)

Impact on the NHS (strategic aim 4)

Impact on housing (strategic aim 4)

OUR VALUES - THE NMC HAS 8 VALUES

This year we have asked people how well we live up to these values.

1

We are a caring organisation with an open management style which values and respects individuals.

5

We are innovative, creative, and ambitious.

2

We enjoy what we do, creating a warm, welcoming, and positive environment.

6

We celebrate our successes and achievements.

3

We are an inclusive community which is informed, influenced, and guided by people with neuromuscular conditions.

7

We believe it is important to create a high level of understanding of what we do in the wider community.

4

We create and maintain an environment where disability is no barrier to achievement.

8

We have the highest ethical and professional values and standards.



WHAT ARE

NEUROMUSCULAR CONDITIONS?

There are about 150 neuromuscular conditions that we see and seek to provide support for at NMC.

These conditions are genetic and inherited. They are all characterised by steady progressive muscle wasting albeit at very varying paces. The physical consequences for those with these conditions are some degree of physical and mobility disability.

This varies but, by way of illustration for the reader, around half of those who come to NMC use a power wheelchair to get about, and many of those who are still “on their feet” we describe as precariously ambulant.

The conditions affect more than the individual who has it. Family, friends, spouses, and work colleagues are all more or less affected and we seek to support that wider community.

Given the inheritance patterns we recognise the emotional and psychological issues that some in the family can face. Put simply, aspects of anger and guilt, fear and regret can all manifest themselves.

“

**THE CONDITIONS
AFFECT MORE THAN
THE INDIVIDUAL**

”

WHAT DO WE DO?

The range of things that are offered at NMC is wide and various. Some might describe it as a quirky basket of opportunities. We don't prescribe. People choose how they want to interact with NMC. People choose how frequently they want that interaction. People choose how much or how little time they want to spend here.

THE KEY ELEMENTS ON OFFER AT NMC OVER THE LAST YEAR ARE LISTED BELOW;

- Talking therapy
- Graphic Design training
- Connect-up social activities
- Employment opportunities in NMC Design and Print (and in other roles)
- Woodworking club
- Hydrotherapy
- Gym
- Support and advice (including writing supportive letters to public services)
- Duke of Edinburgh award scheme
- Support for independence for young people
- Welcome Day programme for new people
- Gardening and accessible allotment
- Volunteer opportunities and internship opportunities
- Personal care
- Commuter minibus service
- Laser Creations venture and 3D Printing club
- Physiotherapy
- Pain management including acupuncture
- Wellbeing sessions and workshops



WELCOME TO OUR SOCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023

This has been a year of rebuilding at the charity as society emerged from the pandemic.

It has been a year during which we have returned to mixing and mingling without concern or hesitation for virtually everyone in (or thinking about joining) the NMC community. These positive trends in society have enabled us to confidently reflect on a year of NMC's positive impact on many more peoples' lives.

It has been a year during which we have hosted a very well attended

Open Day for supporters and others who we wanted to witness our work first hand. We planned a major conference on housing which took place in July of 2023. There will be much more about that in next year's Social Accounts.

It was a sad year. At the end of September one of the founding forces of NMC, our Head of Design Dan Cundall, died at the age of 50. Dan had strongly influenced, enthused, energised, and steered the Centre from its earliest days. His passion for graphic design was a key strength in the development of NMC Design+Print. There is a tribute to Dan later in this booklet.

One of Dan's last projects was to invest in a laser cutter and engraver to further diversify the Design+Print business into design, production, and sale of personalised, and in some cases, 3D items. This is becoming a success. Items are selling online through a new Etsy shop and there are plans to start regularly having a presence at Makers Markets in local towns.

The NMC's commitment to making the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme fully accessible to young people with neuromuscular conditions grew in the year. Demanding expeditions took place, great community volunteering took place by the participants and new skills were learnt. Individuals who thought spending a night under canvas after an evening chatting round a campfire would be an impossible dream proved to themselves that they could do just that.

One of the notable achievements of this last year has been the complete rebuilding of our two oldest shower and toilet rooms and the drains. Our new loos are equipped with some of the very latest equipment. Wash and dry toilets, auto doors, riser toilets and toilet seats, body drier, wetroom shower and changing table, and the very latest H frame ceiling track hoists.

The new toilets have been greatly admired. More importantly they have enabled many more people to be independent in the toilet and shower rooms. They have also provided a great resource for those planning adapted facilities in their own homes.

Once again, I reflect how powerful the NMC culture is when we need to work with suppliers, trades and contractors. We were overwhelmed by the kindness and caring spirit along with collaborative advice we got. Some expertise emerged from volunteers within our community which was great, and a great deal came from our builder, our equipment supplier and our groundworkers. It is a joy to report that we had the most excellent and thoughtful contractors who worked hard to minimise disruption on what was a very complicated job.

In terms of our direction and focus in the year, we have tried to respond and react to a post pandemic challenge. We note that a

significant part of our community put off making key decisions over the last 3 years. The pandemic and lockdowns created an environment where people were inclined to say things like “I’ll sort that out when this is all over” or “I’ll get back in the routine of exercise once we’re all back to normal”. Habits that were keeping people fit and healthy lapsed and major decision points

like adapting the house, making changes at work, moving to use of a wheelchair, and changing vehicle to suit new mobility levels, were missed.

This absence of action on many fronts has left quite a lot of people with a multi-faceted set of major challenges. Lots of things need to change and none of the changes are quick fixes. This set of challenges are overwhelming for many. The NMC has adjusted our approach

to give extra help to this group of people. We identified housing and employment as two areas where we needed to cultivate wider and deeper expertise and do much more. We appointed an Employment and Careers Manager. We allocated new resources to this entirely new post, and demand for support in this area has justified that investment. Often employers need a bit of help to understand neuromuscular conditions, what changes to job tasks and adaptations can help, and what potential that may unleash in the employee. Often it just needs talking through and NMC can help find the solutions that arise from deeper understanding.



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ACTION ON MANY
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MAJOR CHALLENGES.**



SOCIAL ACCOUNTING

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



As a charity, our 'reason for being' is to help people. We set out to make a positive impact on people's lives.

We usually reflect that we probably do make a positive impact, but we want to know for sure. Because we want that affirmation (or not) we seek to measure that impact. And then we seek to independently verify our measurement of impact.

It's not easy! We've been social accounting every year for 16 years. We are still learning. We take a different approach each year. This keeps the process fresh for us and hopefully, for the reader too. Each year generates surprises and disappointments. There are always elements of the Social Accounts which reveal parts of how we operate that warrant celebration, and parts that need refreshing or reworking. We are constantly adapting and changing the things we focus on. Our Social Accounts are a valuable tool in making those choices and changes.

We often hear that organisations (charities, social enterprises, community organisations and commercial organisations) find it too difficult to measure the social impact of their work. But quite rightly funders and other investors expect to know what the impact of their investment has been. We aim, through thorough social accounting, to demonstrate that impact.

PRECONCEPTIONS

It is always interesting and revealing to reflect on how others view somewhere like the NeuroMuscular Centre. The thoughts and reflections below come from many conversations during the year at the NMC.

We are aware that the name of our charity creates some perceptions – some accurate but many inaccurate. Before people come through our doors and see the NMC for themselves, they often report some or all of the following preconceptions;

People see our name and their mind paints a picture.....

- It sounds very clinical
- People will gawp at me
- It sounds like a scientific institution
- There'll be doctors & nurses
- A treatment centre
- It's probably an NHS facility

NMC take the whole person – an holistic approach. Typically, the NHS may focus on only one bit of the person. Preconceptions based on NHS experience impact on how people approach time at NMC. Sometimes there is fear, low expectation, or simply unease.

Prior to someone's first visit many report a perception that involves how the place might feel.....

- A sterile atmosphere
- Professional and serious
- A place where things are done to you
- Expensive
- Quiet
- Formal

And if the person appreciates that we are a charity, they may think.....

- They will be expecting me to make donations or hold fundraising events
- Trying to get me to campaign
- Exploit my image or my story to fundraise

But, although we believe we are extremely professional, the rest of these preconceptions paint a very inaccurate picture.

We are very mindful of how people perceive NMC. It is probably amplified by the fact that most people are connected to NMC in the first instance by a clinician.



We are conscious that some of these preconceptions can cause anxiety or simply less preparedness for them and their family as they get ready to come through our doors for the first time.

REALITY

As you read this set of Social Accounts and absorb more about the shape, size, ethos and culture of NMC, then you'll be experiencing some of the surprise and comfort that so many who come through our doors feel after their first visit.

As you will read, people's actual experiences of NMC leave them describing the charity using words like.....

- An amazing charity
- Warm
- A place that understands me
- Informal
- Fun
- Friendly
- Free
- Confidence booster
- A place to fully relax
- A second home
- A second family
- No need to explain
- Enabling
- Involving
- Empowering
- This is a charity?!

“ A PLACE THAT
UNDERSTANDS ME ”

TACKLING THIS MISMATCH (OR NOT)

We need to keep taking opportunities to explain our work and our ethos to help more people understand better what to expect. Demand to become a part of NMC has never been so high but we do not presume all of that comes with understanding.

We have never given any serious thought to this mismatch of perception v. reality or what we might do to reduce it. Does it matter? Maybe not, but I hope that in airing it, it has helped to illustrate what we are and how we view ourselves.

We try to paint as accurate a picture in our literature, on our website, and in any correspondence. We hope this goes someway to helping alleviate anxieties as well as helping people to begin to understand that we are a charity with a hugely caring culture.



These Social Accounts, and publicising some of the headlines they have generated, will be key to our continuing strategy of helping people to understand what we are, what we offer, and what we expect.

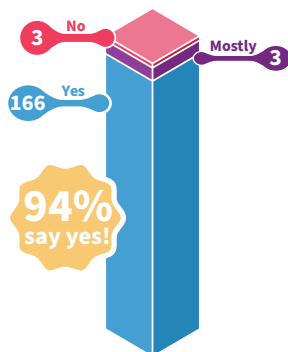


How well does NMC live up to its Values?

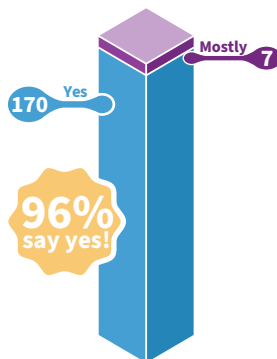
These reflections about the experience of coming to NMC lead us nicely into a section where we measure how well we live up to our values. This year we asked everyone as part of the Big Survey if they felt we lived up to the values. There were 4 potential answers – Yes, Mostly, Partly, or No. The results are overwhelmingly positive. Here are the results;



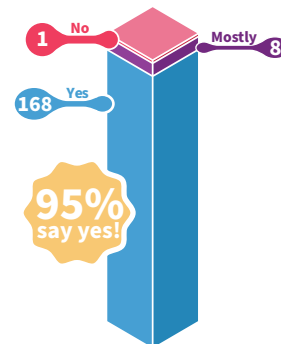
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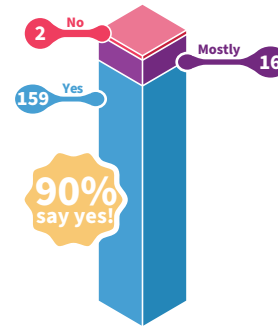
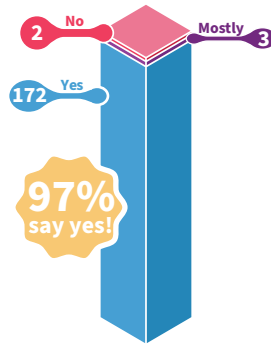
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We are an inclusive community which is informed, influenced, and guided by people with neuromuscular conditions.

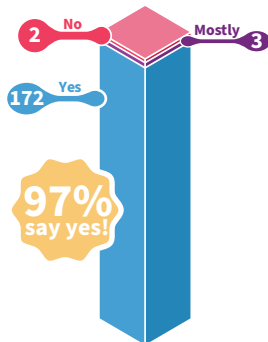


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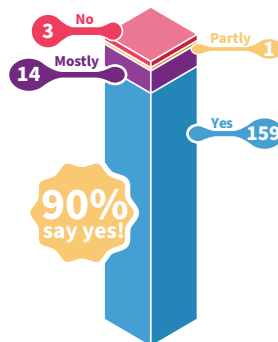


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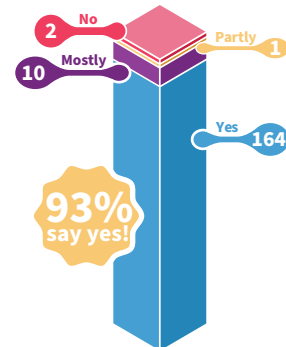
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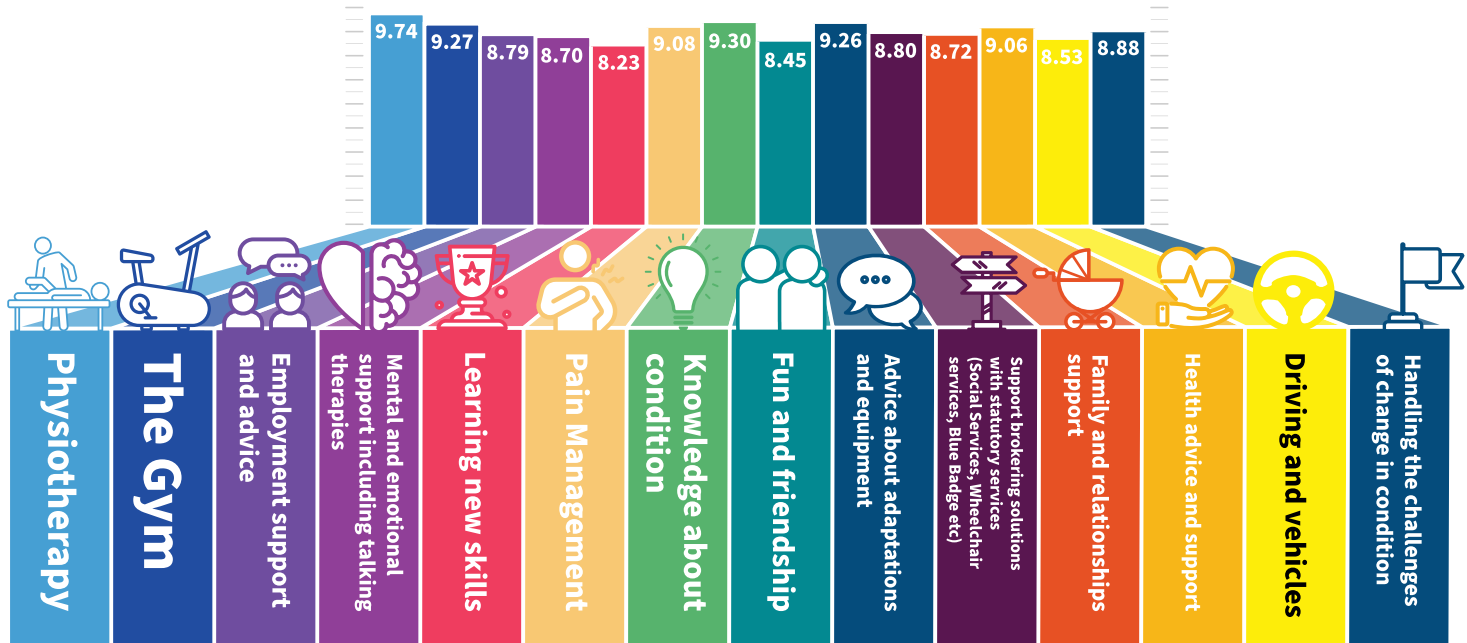


“
We have the highest ethical and
professional values and standards.”





How useful are the things we do? (out of 10)



How useful are the things we do?

We asked people in our Big Survey to rate the usefulness of elements of NMC. People were asked to rate (out of 10) the usefulness, and how much each of the following aspects of NMC were valued by them.

We found it helpful to see this high level of value being attributed across the board. The range from 8.23 up to 9.74 doesn't feel significant. Nonetheless it is very interesting to see those elements receiving almost unanimous top rating and those marginally less useful.

We will explore the impact of some of the above activities in the following sections.



IMPACT ON

RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY LIFE

At the NMC we say that the ‘Centre is here not just for the person with a neuromuscular condition but for the whole family and close friends’

We are acutely aware that neuromuscular conditions, including muscular dystrophy, impact on all areas of life and on the lives of those we hold dear.

Of all respondents to our survey, 19% were from members of our community identifying as ‘a family member or friend’ of someone attending with a neuromuscular condition. That is a substantial number of people and reflects the potential impact the Centre has on our community in the widest sense.

For some, living with neuromuscular conditions can be emotionally challenging for both the affected individual and their immediate family members. Feelings of frustration, anxiety, and sadness in response to the daily struggles associated are often observed, especially with people new to the Centre. This emotional strain can impact relationships within families.



THE BIG SURVEY

In the Big Survey people rated the usefulness and value of NMC in respect of family and other relationships. The overall score for this was 8.72 out of 10.

In response to two further questions, 57% said NMC has a positive impact on their close relationships and 67% of respondents indicated a positive impact on their ability to play a full role in family life due to the support from NMC.

Some of the comments made reflected this, and included:



Coming to NMC has helped me get out of my shell, thanks to seeing and meeting like-minded individuals who have similar lives, but also interact with other walks of life. This I feel has helped me feel more comfortable and confident when interacting with both familiar and new faces.

The progressive nature of neuromuscular conditions mean that family members often take on significant caregiving roles, which can impact on their personal lives and relationships. We are aware that some caregivers may face feelings of stress and exhaustion as they balance their caregiving duties with other responsibilities, and we strive to address this.

External factors have a significant impact. The requirement for costly equipment, home modifications, and the financial burden associated with these demands, can create stress and strain on family finances. This potentially impacts on relationships. The NMC provides practical support to families to access benefits and grants to reduce this load.

Some individuals may experience social isolation, as participating in social activities can become increasingly challenging. We often hear of people limiting their social interactions or becoming the permanent 'host' due to their condition. By this we mean it is easier to host at your own adapted home than venture into the houses of friends and family which may not be very accessible.

Despite the challenges, many families and friends have reported a sense of resilience and personal growth in their experiences. The data reveals instances of strengthened bonds and increased empathy within families and friendships as they navigate the challenges together.



Coming to the NMC gives personal time to both my wife and me. That is time away from being together 24-7. We both gain a little breathing space and new things to talk about when we are back together again.



Advice for my husband has been great to support me to maintain my independence. I can talk about my condition in a positive way.



The NMC offers individuals and families a safe, secure, and reassuring place where everyone can enjoy all the benefits of this unique community. The balance between professional and offering the hand of friendship allows everyone to enjoy this special space.



It's great to chat to others who understand what you're going through.



You give us great support, explain things very well and all the staff are always cheerful and welcoming.



I can have a positive time with family away from the home environment. NMC encourages open approach to difficult/challenging topics.



My wife is very supportive. She comes along to the NMC and sees what exercises I do and encourages me to do them regularly.



We have been warmly welcomed. We are always made to feel an important part of NMC. NMC encourages everyone to participate. Every contribution to a discussion is heard and valued.

The Big Survey gave us a sense of the impact that people feel NMC has on their health.

88% said NMC has a positive impact on their health. 58% say that impact is VERY positive.

This section includes our assessment of the impact of physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, accessible gym, talking therapies and more. There is a compelling body of scientific evidence that physical activity, exercise, and movement are critical to health and well-being, healthy ageing and recovery from illness and injury. This is especially relevant in the context of supporting people to mitigate the effects of neuromuscular conditions.

The NMC continues to promote and encourage our community to be as healthy and active as possible and to have fun. This is evident in the results from the survey. It also indicates how important our centre is to everyone in helping manage their conditions, stay positive and doing everything possible to remain independent.

Our goal is to remove inequalities and barriers to being healthy and active. Having a good level of overall health is linked with a lower risk of chronic disease such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity often prevalent in sedentary populations. Our community are often forced into levels of sedentary lifestyles not through choice but condition deterioration. The benefits of exercise not only improve health but fitness too. Improvements in fitness combat fatigue, improvement in practical function, safer mobilisation, maintenance of strength, improved mood, and independence.

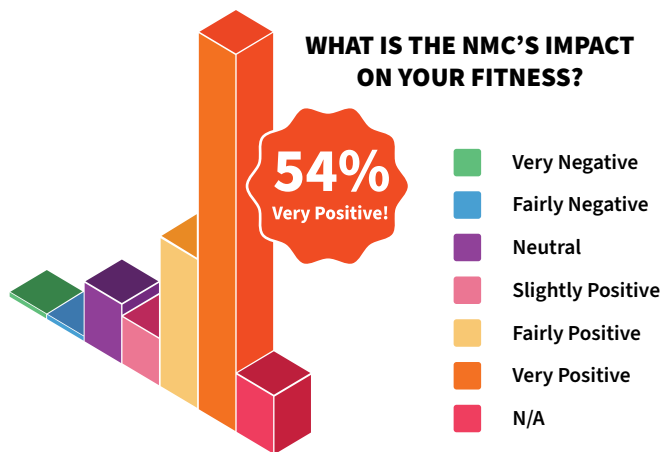


My fitness levels are crucial to my overall health. Having a good level of fitness helps to fight fatigue meaning I am able to achieve more and get more out of life.



Helps with positivity improving my physical and mental well-being, but it also gives me hope with achieving goals I never expected.





“

Improve on my eating habits and try to exercise as much as possible, which I feel is important to improve my overall well-being.

“

Reduces pain, enables cardiac activity in a safe environment, maintains muscle function to continue walking.



Physiotherapy

When asked how useful/valued physiotherapy was at NMC?

Physiotherapy was rated at 9.74 out of 10, demonstrating how valued this service is in helping people with neuromuscular conditions manage their condition and the secondary effects caused by muscle weakness.

A team of 8 (4 Physiotherapists and 4 Therapy Assistants) provide this service at NMC. They all work for the charity and are largely full time.

For those people with progressive neuromuscular conditions, a block of six physio sessions (as usually offered by the NHS) appears to achieve very little. The Physio team at NMC are able to offer ongoing physio, which works well for the majority of people with neuromuscular conditions.

“

Physio helps to maintain the movement I already have.

“

I can get around a lot better with less pain.

“

Post surgery physio was a very important factor - helping me get some/retain mobility. Before my latest surgery, having a connection with NMC was very important. Gym, hydro and physio.

HOW USEFUL IS PHYSIOTHERAPY AT NMC?

80% voted 10/10



Fitness

When asked how useful accessing the gym was at NMC?

This scored 9.27 out of 10. 72% reporting a very positive impact on managing their health and fitness.



My condition is progressive. It is important that I protect the muscles I have. The adapted equipment in the gym helps me do this.



NMC allows me to maintain my current fitness level. In keeping fit, I keep the independence to do some of my personal care like brushing my teeth and doing my make up.



The gym enables me to exercise without judgement. I have the confidence at NMC to look after my body whereas I feel judged in a 'normal' gym.



Keeping active which allows me to stay healthy.

What does improved fitness enable you to do?



Physical work around the home eg. Gardening. Before I joined NMC the challenge was too much to face.



Reduces pain, enables cardiac activity in a safe environment, maintains muscle function to continue walking.



The gym and physio help me remain as physically strong as possible to continue to do everyday activities.



Maintains my basic fitness level which enables me to go for short family walks and enjoy general everyday life.



Pain management

Clients identify pain as a major limit to leading a full life and a productive life.

Pain relief in neuromuscular conditions is very difficult to achieve. Chronic pain can disrupt nearly all aspects of life with neuromuscular conditions - beyond physical pain, it can impede someone's ability to work and participate in social and other activities, impact their relationships and cause feelings of isolation, frustration, and anxiety.

When asked how useful is pain management at the NMC? It was rated as 9.08 out of 10.

66% of respondents saying pain relief offered by the NMC is having a very positive impact and a consequential impact on improving quality of life. These are the tools and techniques used at NMC to help manage pain:

- Electro-therapy
- Soft tissue massage
- Exercise
- Mobilisation
- Hydrotherapy
- Acupuncture



Continue to go to work. Manage pain. Meet people with my condition. Make friends.



I can get around a lot better with less pain.



Working towards keeping my mobility and pain management. I feel I would be using a wheelchair without help from NMC.



Due to reduced pain I am able to move my body more easily, even though I can no longer walk.



It reduces pain and keeps me walking easier for longer.



Keep fit less pain.

HOW USEFUL IS PAIN MANAGEMENT AT NMC?

49% Voted 10/10



The NMC's ability to promote health and fitness and have an impact on the lives of people with neuromuscular conditions has over the past year involved:

2490

physiotherapy one-to-one sessions in the year

650

We saw 650 people with neuromuscular conditions during the year.

126

There were 126 acupuncture appointments to help manage pain.

110

110 hydrotherapy group sessions with an average of 5 people in each session.

52

52 zoom exercise classes with an average weekly attendance of 15-20 people.

150

We saw 150 people with neuromuscular conditions for the first time for assessment at NMC during the year. This gives a sense of the scale of demand from people wanting to access what NMC offers. We came out of the pandemic with a huge waiting list of well over 100 people needing assessment. We have cleared that waiting list and are proud to see new people in a timely manner.

1073

1073 group gym sessions; 3000 attended these sessions. On average people attend once-a-week and some people regularly exercise in the gym twice weekly. These sessions allow our community to self-manage their condition in a safe controlled environment.

Gambia

We have also provided regular exercise advice, progression, and monitoring on zoom to a client in Gambia.

1065

1065 1-2-1 exercise-based appointments focussing on exercises specific to each person's individual weaknesses.



“

**ENABLE ME TO
HAVE A LIFE OUTSIDE
MY HOME.**

”

Mental and emotional support

How useful is the mental and emotional aspect of the NMC?

This was rated as 8.7 out of 10. 58% of respondents reported a very positive impact on their mental and psychological well-being. It is understood that good mental health is as important as exercise for overall health. Poor mental health can weaken our immune system, affect sleep, and increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

“

The centre helps me a lot for my mental health, being able to understand and relate to my condition. It also gets me out of the house more to socialise and meet people.

“

Helps on positivity improving my physical and mental well-being, but it also gives me hope on achieving goals I never expected.

“

The biggest thing for me is how much it helps me mentally with my condition.

Finally, now we are out of the pandemic, it is obvious that there has been a significant deterioration of general health, fitness, increased anxieties, and trepidation relating to group settings throughout our community. This was primarily due to isolation, and lack of access to the Centre. Over the past year the NMC has continued to promote and encourage a healthy lifestyle encompassing all aspects of health.



Excellent advice and physiotherapy means I maintain my strength, mobility, and independence. This impacts hugely on my mental well-being too.



It is the most amazing place for positivity towards life for people with life limiting conditions.

In 2022 we kicked off with a summer show case held in the meadow to allow those with higher anxieties of meeting others in an enclosed space to feel confident - our focus was on promoting health, healthy eating and falls prevention, with a healthy BBQ to follow. This event was possibly the first major group meeting for many of the attendee's post pandemic.

As post-pandemic confidence grew, we were able to gradually make changes like increasing the number of face-to-face appointments, more gym sessions and reintroducing hydrotherapy on a regular basis.

Our weekly Zoom exercise class, that ran through the pandemic, has continued to be successful in helping many remain active, improving both physical and psychological health.

The Duke of Edinburgh awards have been a huge success in enabling many of our younger community to become active, improving their confidence and allowing them to become as independent as possible. The NMC has enabled some of the participants to complete the physical challenge aspect of the course in the NMC gym, something they would have struggled with otherwise.



It gives me a positive mindset. More 'can do' than 'it's too difficult'! I have become more independent due to advice and guidance given to me.



Gives me the confidence to try to do things for myself without relying on others – independence.



Helps improve with my overall fitness, as well as my physical and mental health.



All the things I enjoy doing, without them I would be house bound, and mental health would be a big issue.

Mental and emotional support

We have also run several mindfulness and Tai-Chi courses over the year and have partnered with a counselling charity, Listening Ear, who provides psychological support to those in need of help. All have been successful in helping the members of our community to lead healthier lives.

On a final note, it has been an exciting year for the centre in regaining our confidence after the setback of the pandemic. The Centre is becoming a thriving exciting place again with health and fitness in the forefront of people's minds.



Due to NMC being such a positive environment, that translates to everyone involved. Also, as no disability is a barrier at the NMC, you can be the best version of you.



I am able to focus on what I can do rather than what I can't. Going to a regular gym, it would be much harder to maintain this mindset.

When asked what is NMC's impact on your health and what can you do because of that?



Being able to access the NMC gym and support of the Physiotherapy team helps me to keep active and manage my condition. I wouldn't feel confident enough to attend an external gym at the moment and am so grateful for the NMC gym as it keeps me active.



Due to NMC being such a positive environment, that translates to everyone involved. Also, as no disability is a barrier at the NMC, you can be the best version of you.



The tailored exercise programme helps me to maintain muscle strength, manage pain and has a positive effect on mental health as well as physical.

“

The tailored exercise programme helps me to maintain muscle strength, manage pain and has a positive effect on mental health as well as physical.

“

Staying fit is important as I have a young child to look after and although I'm not as strong as I used to be, I feel that I'm a lot stronger than I would be if I didn't have the support of the NMC.



IMPACT ON

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



R eal, meaningful employment has the potential to enrich lives, provide purpose and foster feelings of reward and fulfillment.

In June 2023 The House of Commons released a briefing entitled *Disabled People in Employment*. It suggested that at the start of the year, only 53.7% of disabled people of working age were in employment compared to 82.7% of people who are not disabled. That equates to 342,000 working-age disabled people that were unemployed.

NeuroMuscular Centre has always been keen to address this disparity, with the provision of employment, training, and voluntary opportunities for people with neuromuscular conditions being key objectives.

Reflecting on the feedback we have received from around 20 individuals in our community over the last year, it has become clear that, following the pandemic, employment is a topic of increasing importance for our community. It is affecting a far wider spectrum of people in our community than ever before. We feel NMC must try to respond to this demand. We are looking for ways to open doors for more people as they seek employment, seek to stay in employment, have purpose, and gain enrichment through social engagement, at work. To this end steps are already underway to make this vision an achievable reality. We have invested in a new role at the Centre; an Employment and Careers Manager. There will be more about the impact of that new role in next year's Social Accounts when the role will have been properly established for a full year.

We will aim to provide more opportunities at NMC, but also support people in our community who are already employed or are seeking employment elsewhere. People with neuromuscular conditions and their employers can experience actual or perceived worries about access restrictions, social stigma, and fear of the

cost of reasonable adjustments. The Centre is a unique base of knowledge and practical support, able to provide information and demonstrate equipment, with a thorough understanding from the perspectives of both an employee and an employer of people with neuromuscular conditions. This positions NMC as a valuable resource. Our Chief Executive has been key to providing this reassurance and direct expert approach to employers. The new Employment and Careers Manager will add to this and give us greater capability to support more people.

We seek a higher level of engagement with the wider working world and become more visible as a 'Disability Confident' employer that is determined to demonstrate the benefits of an inclusive workplace. Simultaneously, working with individuals with neuromuscular conditions to give them the confidence, knowledge, and support to ask for the adjustments that will help to keep them at work.

As one person reflecting on their ability to stay employed simply states, 'They [the NMC] help', and the Centre is driven to continue to do so, adapting and tailoring our services to meet the growing needs of our community.



**I FEEL VALUED
AND PART
OF A TEAM. I FEEL
NEEDED AND WORTHY
IN A WORKING
ENVIRONMENT.**



NMC Design+Print sits at the heart of NMC's employment offering. With core values that focus on people, growth and creativity, the graphic design team work to create a model demonstrating the benefits of employment, both for people with disabilities and for the employer.

With an annual income regularly exceeding £100,000 and a wide and varied customer base that spreads across the length and breadth of the UK, NMC Design+Print offers real opportunities for staff members to work for a diverse mix of design clients, from individuals, small charities, local education providers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's), right up to much larger businesses with a national reach.

As part of the Social Accounting process, the Design+Print team took part in a short survey to examine the impact of work, and the role of NMC in their journey. The findings will be shared throughout this section and supported with case studies from two key members of staff.



Employment at the Centre and beyond

Information gathered will also be used to demonstrate the need for career and employment support in a larger context, focusing on provision for community members in the wider working environment, and support that can be offered to employers.

People with neuromuscular conditions work at every level of the NeuroMuscular Centre, from volunteers, people receiving “permitted earnings” to salaried members of staff, senior management, and members of the board of Trustees. Permitted earnings are an amount of income that certain disabled people can earn without it impacting on their benefits income.

Providing meaningful opportunities means listening to people, offering support and finding ways to unlock potential. Living with a progressive condition can become isolating, reducing people’s confidence within the workplace. NMC is keen to tackle these barriers and equip people to work creatively, confidently, and independently in an accessible and supportive environment.

NMC Design+Print is currently the hub for skill building and work experience within the Centre. And most members of the 8 strong design team have a neuromuscular condition. Although each person chooses to access different levels of support from the Centre, over half of the participants in the Design+Print survey said that NMC had changed their lives. Furthermore, all identified positive impacts on their working life. Help recorded includes

access to equipment and benefits advice, workspace adaptations, having staff on hand to assist when dexterity, strength or stamina gets in the way of a task, provision of transport, flexibility to include physiotherapy into the working day, and the offer of homeworking during times of crisis.

The importance of NMC’s ‘can do’ culture was also highlighted, There is a culture of ‘no hesitation to help’ and people sensitively offer help if they perceive you might need it without denying your own abilities as they are.

ONE DESIGN+PRINT STAFF MEMBER EXPLAINS

MD, along with other factors, ended my working life as a HGV driver. Retraining at NMC has given me a new work experience that I would not have thought of.

OTHERS SAID



Working in D+P has allowed me to gain so much confidence in my working career.



it’s given me the opportunity to push myself and achieve.

When asked what staff members enjoyed most about working at NMC, the ability to interact with others was a key feature in all the answers received.



Getting out of the house and talking with different people.



Being with other people in similar situations as myself.



It's a friendly, open, supportive, and creative workplace. People understand the needs of people with neuromuscular conditions and its impact on your capacity to work. People are positive and help each other. It's a good atmosphere.

One staff member explains the importance of recognition and contribution:



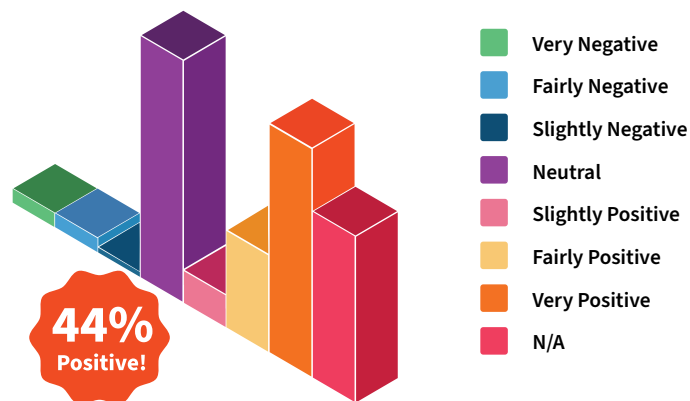
NMC gave me a real path to employment while making me feel I can contribute to the outcomes of the social enterprise, the charity and wider community.





Employment at the Centre and beyond

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS BEING PART OF THE NMC COMMUNITY GIVEN YOU OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE OR FEEL A GREATER SENSE OF PURPOSE.



THE BIG SURVEY

This is supported by findings from the NMC Big Survey 2023 which show that 57% of respondents found that being part of the NMC community has given them opportunities to make a difference and feel a greater sense of purpose.

Experiences gained at NMC also have the potential to unlock opportunities for people working outside of the Centre itself.

In the Big Survey, 44% of respondents say that NMC has had a positive impact on their working life (or ability to do volunteering), and a further 25% describe this impact as being VERY positive. Recipients said:



[NMC] has given me invaluable support in my work and has led to my part time employment. This helps and make me want to get more involved.

Since the pandemic, staff across the Centre have identified a growing body of people that need support with issues surrounding employment. This can be broken down into two key areas; young people with neuromuscular conditions looking for a pathway into employment, and more mature people that need employment support due to a change in condition or circumstance.

The need for this support seems to have been accelerated by the periods of lockdown. During these times of isolation, many people experienced a significant and unexpected deterioration in their

condition. Numerous factors contribute towards this, including lack of access to vital services and medical care, restricted movement, and the impact of Covid itself etc. In many cases, individuals were ready to return to work but, lacking necessary adjustments for their mobility, new equipment, or a better level of understanding from their employer, have been forced to consider medical retirement.

“

I had to retire in 2011 as my profession (vascular surgeon) was 'incompatible' with my FSHD. I have not worked or volunteered in any significant capacity since.

”

Often, with the correct information, connections and support, these issues are not hard to tackle, and many individuals can continue in gainful employment for years to come, as productive and high performing members of staff. We have seen an emerging trend where the Centre has been asked to intervene to offer employers a better understanding of neuromuscular conditions and to provide information about reasonable adjustments that can be made, often at little cost to the employer. We provide this

ONE FAMILY MEMBER OF AN NMC SERVICE USER SAID

It has been a challenge [for him] getting back into work - but with advice given by NMC - he has been able to adapt to the situation.

support without charge. We have seen six cases in the year where there has been this level of intervention where previously there had only been very occasional requests for this type of support.

A growing trend toward automation and home working has also been identified. Working from home offers a cheap and painless way for employers to give jobs to people with disabilities, but this also perpetuates isolation and othering.

The benefits of working in a social environment are noticeable for everyone, but especially those who already face social and access barriers and have a greater likelihood of living with a feeling of separation.

One survey participant explains:

“

Helping people to get employment in the wider community is really important to breaking the narrative that disabled people are a burden. Many disabled people internalise this narrative and it can be really damaging to their mental health.



Employment at the Centre and beyond

The propagation of this detrimental societal stigma is thrust into view by a statement made by another service user who said:



I AM PRETTY USELESS.

This ideology is something that the Centre has long been keen to tackle and in fact, this individual went on to say that NMC is enabling them by:



Providing a bridge from my previous life to the future.



NMC reminds me that inclusion is possible in the world and that disabled people are valued.

With the accelerated need for support in this area, NMC will look for new, and more holistic ways to respond. NMC Training, NMC Support and NMC Design+Print provide some resource, but the role of physiotherapy must also be noted. Recipients of the Big Survey repeatedly express the positive impact that physiotherapy, exercise, and other treatments have on the longevity, or re-emergence of their career.



because of improvements to my overall health & fitness, I am now working part-time with my husband. I also drive my children to/from school every day (1 hr round trip) and I am becoming the welfare officer for our local British judo club.'



And this response was just one of many that confirm the Centre's role in helping to support people that work in a variety of different industries, full- or part-time, paid or voluntary.



[The impact of NMC means] I can continue to go to work and socialise with friends/family', and another service user agrees, stating, 'I feel I can still work full time, still be a parent and do activities with the children.



Maintains my mobility to enable me to keep working.



[Having physio] allows me to work for longer and keep myself focused and motivated.

OTHERS FOCUS MORE SPECIFICALLY ON THE ROLE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT



By assisting with my pain management, I am able to work.

to step back from employment, volunteering, or social activities. Liaising directly with employers, as well as welcoming individuals and family members affected by neuromuscular conditions into our community can help to tackle some of these issues.

NMC is also keen to kindle, or boost, people's confidence through the provision of voluntary roles at the Centre. These opportunities can help individuals prepare for paid employment elsewhere whilst learning new skills and making social connections. After undertaking several months of voluntary work with NMC Design+Print, one individual was able to re-enter the world of full-time employment.

The impact of, and need for, more employment specific support cannot be overlooked. This is not just aimed at individuals with neuromuscular conditions, but also their employers who often require education about these conditions, and practical support to allow them to offer more relevant assistance. Due to the slow progressive nature of many types of these conditions one or two changes can offer long term support and facilitate access to the working environment for years to come.

A loss of confidence also seems to be a key factor in people's decision



Thank you for giving me this opportunity and opening my eyes to this sort of environment. It's helped me build up the courage and self-motivation to even consider working again.



Work experience and voluntary roles are available for people affected by neuromuscular conditions across every department at NMC, and with the introduction of a new enterprise, there exists real potential to open up a raft of new opportunities.

WHEN ASKED HOW NMC HAS IMPACTED ON THEIR CONFIDENCE LEVELS, RESPONSES INCLUDED:



I can sometimes feel sorry for myself. Coming here has given me confidence I can do it!!



NMC has helped remove the 'stigma' I have felt in the past about how I might be judged.



I feel a sense of happiness and positivity on my visits to the NMC. This then makes me confident in myself and able to meet friends, shop etc without feelings of inadequacy.



CASE STUDY

JAKE HUDSON DESIGNER

A JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT WITH NMC DESIGN+PRINT



Whilst the offer of meaningful employment has long been a goal of NMC Design+Print, focus has recently redoubled to offer a greater sense of progression and create more opportunities for paid employment.

The development of team member, Jake, has proven to be a particular area of success for the team. He has become a key member of staff and is working toward the goal of becoming Senior Designer. We hope that reading his case study below gives an insight into his journey, and what he hopes to achieve with the support of NMC.

NMC DESIGN+PRINT'S IMPACT ON MY WORKING CAREER

It was while attending an NMC family event, 'You are not Alone' in March 2017 that NMC first had an impact on my life. I was studying Software engineering in university but wasn't sure what my future would entail. I was worried that my disability was holding me back and that there might not be a career path ahead. You Are Not Alone opened my mind; I wasn't alone and NMC made me feel welcome, expressing great interest in the skills I could bring to the Design+Print team.

Later that year, I began a work placement with NMC Design+Print alongside my studies. The opportunity enhanced my confidence and self-belief in my own abilities, I realised that I can work, and there is a career future ahead for me.

The placement gave me the bug to return and volunteer my time 2 days a week and it gave me great satisfaction. I offered my time and skills to NMC, and in return I was making friends, attending events and receiving physiotherapy. During that time, I helped design the new NMC website and continued to develop my design skills.

Over the following years, the late Head of Design, Dan Cundall, had a huge influence on me. I looked up to him and learnt many skills from him and other members of the team. It caused a shift in my thinking; if staff with neuromuscular conditions can work, what is to stop me from achieving this too. At NMC, disabilities are not considered a disadvantage. Instead, they are embraced, and skills and knowledge are celebrated.

In January 2019 my hard work paid off and I became an official member of the Design+Print team. This was the catalyst needed to kick start my working career and I felt accepted for the skills that I was bringing to the team. Then, dreaded covid arrived and everyone was sent home and work was limited. I didn't let this hold me back but,

instead, saw it as an opportunity to learn and expand my design knowledge. NMC kept my mind active and ambitious to continue learning during those uncertain times.

In 2021, my confidence was beginning to grow, and I agreed to get more involved by helping

**MARCH
2017**

NMC Family
Event at
Jodrell Bank

2017

Work
placement
with NMC
Design+Print

2018

Volunteering
2 days a week
at NMC

2019

Official
Member of
the NMC
Design+Print
team

**"TO ME BEING
A DESIGNER
AT NMC
DESIGN+PRINT
DOESN'T FEEL
LIKE WORK"**

Covid Struck
Working from
home

19/20

2021

Design
Principal
Sessions for
NeuroMuscular
Pathfinders

2022

Work
experience with
Muscle Help
Foundation

Working
towards the
Senior Designer
Role at NMC
Design+Print

2023

Kay, NMC's graphic design tutor, to deliver some basic design principal sessions for Pathfinders Neuromuscular Alliance. I helped lead a small group of young people with MD to write a brief for a flyer design, which I eventually went on to produce for them. If I had been asked to do any kind of public speaking before this point, I would have run a mile, but this opportunity gave me the confidence to improve my skills and begin to embrace a mentoring role.

At the beginning of 2022 NMC offered me some external work experience with the Muscle Help Foundation (MFH). Whilst working with this muscular dystrophy focused charity, I learnt to interact directly with the customer, work to their time scales and address all requirements. This experience increased my independence and understanding from a customer perspective.

It was sometimes challenging because I had to respect their existing branding and came to recognise that different companies use different software. Consequently, I had to learn to use new software which encouraged me to experiment and improve my knowledge with these technologies.

“NMC ALLOWED ME TO ACHIEVE WHAT I THOUGHT WAS IMPOSSIBLE”

Throughout 2022 I was continuing to improve as a designer by taking on more ambitious projects which, in turn, made me more confident in my own abilities. Toward the end of the year, I took on one of NMC's biggest projects, helping to create the programme for The Spirit of Christmas (a much-loved and star-studded carol concert that has become a staple of the Centre's calendar).

The project really kickstarted my desire to learn and take on more responsibility within my designs. Around this time, I started to have discussions with my team leaders about progression within NMC Design+Print and began to consider what could come next for me and what that might look like. It became apparent that my

next goal was to work towards becoming Senior Designer. I knew this would come with greater responsibility but was excited to pursue the next step.

NMC Design+Print has positively impacted on five years of my life and is now an integral part of my weekly routine. I work four days a week, two of which are spent in the office, and care, support, and transport to, from, and at the centre is provided. These services give me independence. I don't have to rely on my parents or carers, I just go to work and come home like everyone else.





Employment at the Centre and beyond

Volunteers and staff receiving limited permitted earnings form an important part of NMC's workforce.

Permitted earnings are the limited earnings some disabled people can receive without impacting on their benefit entitlements.

Employment can, and should, offer much more than just financial rewards. It is important to foster an environment where people give their time, but receive knowledge, skills, experiences, and joy in return.

SOME MEMBERS OF STAFF DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCES



It's made my life far more liveable and balanced. Prior to this I was self-employed for 20 years and had reached burn out point with limited mobility and stress. I was lucky to find some respite when studying under a scholarship but then NMC gave me a real path to employment while making me feel I can contribute.



[I] have been able to benefit from being in an accepting and positive environment that focuses on what you can do - not what you can't. This has been eye opening, and I owe a debt of thanks to the NMC community who keep validating the belief that we are all capable of challenging and pushing past the boundaries that ill health, disability and societal perceptions often put in our path.

Being given the chance to be creative plays a big part in this,

A BIG SURVEY PARTICIPANT STATES:



My time learning and working in design has opened doors for me and I now use D+P for all printing and raising awareness of the Centre through my design work.

ANOTHER ADDS



Seeing the incredible work that NMC does, gives me a huge sense of purpose. Enabling me to feel positive again and look for, even small ways, in which I can make a difference for others.

This brings us back to a key aim of NMC, and indeed that of the social accounting process; listening to our community and addressing their needs.

Throughout the Design+Print survey, and the much larger NMC Big Survey 2023, participants continuously extol the virtues of employment; the social interaction it brings, and an integration into a wider and more diverse community. This is summarised simply by one participant,

“ I have met some very talented people who have helped me on this journey in life. ”



One of the most complex, expensive, exciting, and frightening decisions people face in life is the choice of the locality of where to live and the style of house to make into your home.

When living with a neuromuscular condition, there is an added layer of challenge - matching a desired lifestyle with the, sometimes harsh, reality of finding a suitable home which is affordable, practical, accessible, and available. The NMC community shares a wealth of information and experiences which enables people to make choices with more confidence, based on the extensive collective knowledge of the NMC team and community.

The Big Survey showed that 27% of the NMC Community who responded said that NMC had VERY positively impacted on the house they lived in including things like their ability to make the right adaptations at home. Overall 55% of those who responded said the NMC's impact on their housing had been slightly, fairly, or very positive.

IMPACT OF KNOWLEDGE

This year in preparation for the extensive NMC bathroom renovations, people were asked to share their experiences of equipment which assisted them. Companies were invited to demonstrate equipment which meets 21st century design expectations being stylish and practical within a person's own home.



Advice to obtain equipment I never knew existed.



Supportive before/during adaptations; great advice about equipment purchases.

We often hear people using words like 'advice', 'confidence' and 'supportive' when they describe the value of being part of the NMC community.

IMPACT OF BEING PREPARED TO FACE THE FUTURE - KNOWING YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Opening discussions about any changes which the future may bring can be overwhelming. When living with a condition which is progressive, it can be difficult to know how to approach the dilemma of whether to make alterations and adaptations to an existing home or move to a different style of property. Decisions affect the whole family and having conversations at the NMC help.



Ideas for home adaptations help with practical issues – my family have good understanding about my condition, and we talk about it.



Talking to NMC encouraged us to move house.



Giving advice on home adaptations and visiting home to show what possible and NMC visiting home to see what might be possible.

When adaptations are agreed to be the preferred option, working with statutory services can be daunting. NMC helps people with the process of applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant, which can be lengthy with much detail needed to complete forms.

Throughout the year NMC has been able to offer people time to share ideas for redesigning home layouts. We helped by looking at plans and sourcing appropriate equipment in preparation for working with statutory services like the housing and adaptations teams to create the facilities the family require. We can help and advise on issues that range from VAT on adaptations to types of lift most suitable.

The Big Survey results gave a score 8.8 out of 10 for the usefulness of NMC is brokering solutions with statutory services:



Home renovated and future proofed with downstairs toilet and ramp instead of stairs in garden.



Great advice re changes to bathroom / kitchen.



Supportive throughout process.



Confidence, clinical expertise and back up for Disabled Facilities Grant. Lots of encouragement and help to apply.

IMPACT ON

IMPACT OF KNOWING CHOICES AND SHARING ADVICE

HERE IS A SELECTION OF COMMENTS REFLECTING THE THOUGHTS OF PEOPLE AS THEY START TO FORMULATE EARLY PREPARATORY PLANS.

Decisions to move or adapt a home may not need to be made immediately, but giving thought to possible future options can greatly increase feelings of being in control and reduce the sense of anxiety felt by uncertainty.



THE BIG SURVEY

gave us an average score of 8.8 out of 10 for NMC's usefulness/value in enabling people to handle the challenges of change of condition.



I need to move from upstairs flat



Looking to move to own home in a couple of years –when time comes advice will be valuable; looking forward to housing event



Discussion (at NMC) on how to make early preparation for when things are more difficult in the future eg. Moving to more appropriate accommodation



Move to bungalow



Home renovated and future proofed

Helps me to think about things early and make preparations before the condition makes it too difficult



Very thorough advice. future proof

IMPACT OF UNDERSTANDING, ACCEPTING AND SELF-MANAGING A LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITION

9.30 out of 10 is the overall score of how useful NMC's knowledge about neuromuscular conditions is for those who completed the Big Survey. This is a significant result from the survey. The collective approach of the NMC is to answer questions honestly and accurately at the appropriate time, whether at a Welcome Day (first visit), or after years of connection with the Centre. Having knowledge helps to make informed, realistic choices when searching for the right house which is equipped to match someone's lifestyle.

The impact of being in the right home is best described by these quotes:



The impact of having house fully adapted and equipped means I can rest properly enabling me to work and socialise.



In being able to get around my house fully I can invite family and friends over.



Feel comfortable and safe. Stay independent. keeping family together.



The NMC arranges a full and varied programme of social opportunities (we call it “Connect Up”) for everyone in the NMC community offering friendship, new experiences, fun and relaxation.

The NMC community is very aware of the high incidence of social isolation which can develop for people when long term health conditions impact on opportunities to fully participate in social and leisure activities.

People who responded gave an overall score of 8.45 out of 10 for NMC’s value/usefulness for fun and friendship.

In terms of NMC’s impact on people’s ability to enjoy holidays – 59% regard NMC as having a positive impact with 29% of them citing NMC as having a VERY positive impact.

IMPACT OF NMC ON SOCIAL LIFE AND SUPPORT NETWORK

Enjoyment of social events can soon be reduced when leisure activities lose the option for spontaneity and become ‘hard work’ needing to be carefully planned to ensure facilities will be accessible, risks of falls will be low or there will be space to move around in a power wheelchair.

Opportunity to make new friendships is a great strength of the NMC and the impact of these friendships is evident in this selection of quotes:

“

Meeting people with the same condition and experiencing the same difficulties has been invaluable.

“

My circle of best friends was created through NMC.

“

NMC is an extension of my family.

““

I feel confident to go out and about using my mobility scooter. NMC has helped remove the stigma I felt in the past about how I might be judged.

““

Connect Up has been great for getting to know people some of whom will be friends for life.

““

New friends, colleagues, and a support network.

““

Benefit greatly from attending social activities with my peers.

““

I am less disabled and more enabled. I am more able to engage in social activities.

Shared personal experiences and practical solutions have a positive impact of enabling leisure.

The NMC community lives throughout the whole UK (and beyond) and has experience of travelling thousands of miles for work and leisure.

By hosting two holiday workshops, the NMC has enabled the sharing of this knowledge and opening opportunities to many people as these quotes show:

““

Sharing info on good days out /holidays helps with planning and removes some anxiety.

““

Keeps me fit and active enough to travel and to enjoy holidays at home and abroad.

““

I've had some really good recommendations for accessible holidays.

““

Can do attitude helps me to remain positive. Friendships at the NMC are important for maintaining a positive outlook.

““

Holiday advice e.g. discussions about airports and chatting with others about their experiences.

““

I have joined the crossword group and wheel and wander when they are near home.

““

Gives me confidence to go to restaurants.



NMC OFFERS TO LOAN SOME SPECIALIST PIECES OF EQUIPMENT (FREE OF CHARGE) TO THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Things like:

- Mobile hoisting
- Specific height furniture
- Adjustable furniture
- or other aids.

These can make the difference between someone being able to go on holiday or travel for business and not.

Knowledge of, and access to, appropriate equipment and facilities is a game changer and we are very pleased NMC is able to assist:

“

**EQUIPMENT NOT
JUST FOR HOME BUT ALSO
BEEN ON HOLIDAY.**

”

“

I can borrow the NMC mobile hoist – this relieves a financial burden. This is really important as being disabled often means holidays can't be done on the cheap.

”

NMC PROVIDE LEISURE AND RELAXATION OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF CONFIDENCE, POSITIVITY, AND MENTAL / EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Leisure is an important part of maintaining good physical, mental and emotional health and one which is often restricted.

The impact of regular activities at the Centre is wide reaching for the community and people described it in the following ways;



And of course laughter.



Confidence to take on air travel and holiday.



Can do attitude helps me to remain positive.



Days out with Connect up. I've learnt Tai Chi which I really enjoy.



NMC is my break.



Going around National Trust properties/RHS Bridgewater.



Fishing.



Going in the shed.



Not afraid to go explore use knowledge and support from NMC to do things.



Gardening – I moved from a house with a garden 12 years ago.



Thoroughly enjoyed doing poetry- relaxing and fun. Crafting has been great too.



Friendships at the NMC are important for maintaining a positive outlook.

IMPACT ON

BEING POSITIVE, HAVING CONFIDENCE AND A SENSE OF PURPOSE

Significant research (Sonnby-Borgström and Jönsson, 2004) into the infectious nature of emotions, known as ‘emotional contagion’ refers to the spontaneous spread of emotions and behaviours within a group of people.

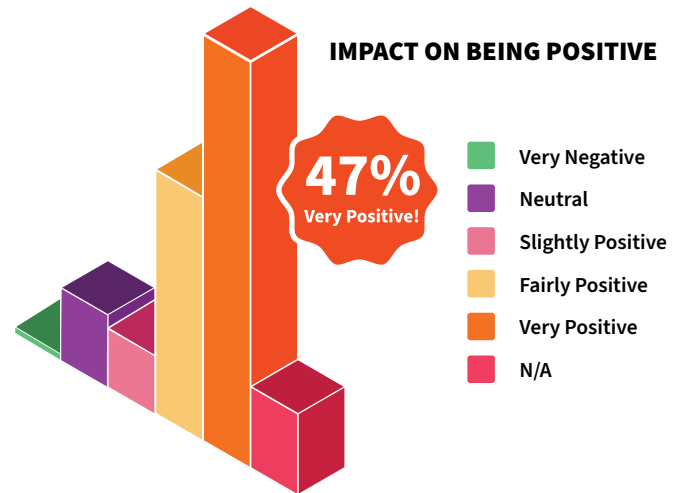
We certainly witness this at NMC on a daily basis, where the warm and positive culture and the ‘can do’ attitude we aim for seems to be infectious. It seems to filter through from staff and volunteers to everyone in our community who may be attending for physio, the gym, and the various clubs and courses we run here.

This is highlighted by many people completing the survey, with comments such as:



I always feel as though I have an added spring in my step when I leave the NMC. The positive atmosphere is infectious and can turn even the worst days into good ones. The NMC encourages me to focus on what I can do rather than what I can't.

This is further supported by our survey results, where 86% say NMC is having a positive impact on their ability to be positive – with 51% saying that impact is VERY positive.



78% said that NMC had a positive impact on enabling them to be independent and do the things they want to do – 49% described that impact as VERY positive.

The knock-on result of this is that people say they are able to 'do more' outside of NMC; with family, relying less on main carers and being more independent at home. Feeling positive and confident, as well as real tangible changes made by our team, allows people to contribute elsewhere.

This also extends to those unable to visit NMC regularly in person:



The ongoing support of NMC, albeit at a distance and over Zoom, is a constant support to me in remaining active, remembering to do exercises, and keeping positive.

The advice and support offered to people from afar gives people the confidence to replicate exercises they've been shown in their local gym, and to go walking or swimming.

Anecdotally, using NMC's gym and positivity are inextricably linked. When coming here for the first time, people often express surprise that they can use a gym and exercise safely as they may have been advised in the past that exercise is risky and therefore avoid it. Our physio team are very goal orientated and will always ask a client what they would like to achieve. The concept of there being something to strive towards is empowering and encourages people to be an active participant in their course of treatment.

When we welcome people here for the first time, our team will set the expectation that the client is the driving force in terms of what happens during an appointment, and that they as physios are very much guided by them.

The link between the gym and improved mental health is a theme that runs through the survey feedback, with comments including:



Attending the NMC helps me to feel positive about being included in a friendly community atmosphere and attending physio and gym sessions enables me to be positive about my physical health.



Using the NMC gym helps me feel healthier, more active and improves my general wellbeing, all of which help me to carry out daily tasks such as playing with my child, working and household chores. Without the support NMC I feel as though my health would have declined at a much faster rate.

IMPACT ON BEING POSITIVE, HAVING CONFIDENCE AND A SENSE OF PURPOSE

Being at NMC, surrounded by other people with the same or similar conditions and the peer support that provides is invaluable. Seeing others not just managing but thriving promotes confidence:



Looking around at the positive attitudes of others and learning from them.



Seeing other lovely people, similarly or worse affected than me, doing all they can do and be, is inspiring and motivating. Reading reports and stories associated with NMC is an encouraging source too.

Being invited to talk to others to share experiences, such as going to university, is a very empowering experience and is something that we try to facilitate as much as possible. It is the people who attend NMC that influence what happens here and the direction of travel we take.

Our community of people affected by neuromuscular conditions is well represented on the board of trustees, and forms around half the staff team. From the people who work here, to volunteers, carers, and physio clients; every voice and opinion is valued and considered, which in turn boosts confidence:



However small my contribution I always feel that staff boost my confidence. They note and listen with interest. This is a help when I am feeling negative.



CASE STUDY

ANDREW DUFFY CONFIDENCE

Since I first started coming to the NMC fourteen years ago I was encouraged to pursue my dream of becoming an actor and being involved in the Arts.

The physio team came to see me in my first college show - the Rocky Horror Show. Someone advised me on finding accessible courses for university and I felt confident in applying. I have an HNC in Acting and a BA Hons Distinction in Comedy Writing and Performance.

I have performed at the Royal Exchange in Manchester, The Lowry, and other venues, including the Edinburgh Fringe for BBC Ouch. One of my highlights was reading at the NMC fundraiser; Spirit of Christmas carol concert in Chester Cathedral with Matthew Kelly and other actors.

It was the NMC who gave me the self-confidence. I am now a board member of Triple C - an organisation which promotes inclusivity in the Arts - we won a BAFTA last year.

My confidence has enabled me to give talks to young people both at the NMC and at Manchester Childrens' Hospital.

NMC seeks to enable a growth in people's sense of purpose.

Some felt that they did not have somewhere to be or that there were not any volunteering opportunities available to them until attending NMC. Within our young community, these experiences have even been used to contribute to achieving their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. One person we support now offers mentoring, and attributes this to NMC improving their mental and physical health:



Being part of NMC community has given me opportunities such as volunteering in fundraising and being involved in the university support group. This gave me a sense of purpose and the feeling of making a difference.

This is not just apparent for people that access our services; those in a care role are also included and activities that the Centre offers are also cited as giving a sense of purpose such as shed club and fishing club, or, for example, a sense of achievement from steering a narrowboat on one of our regular trips.



THE BIG SURVEY

In the Big Survey 71% of respondents said NMC had a positive impact of enabling them to keep their heads above water on a day-to-day basis with 39% of those saying that the impact was VERY positive.

We conclude that this is likely to be down to the practical solutions and support we can offer, owing to the level of expertise and experience here. Examples given include helping with the complexities of the PIP (Personal Independence Payment) application process and helping to communicate to wheelchair services to ensure the correct advice is given on what wheelchair to have.



There is always someone to advise on issues from physio to social care. If there is an impasse, then someone will eventually be found who can advise or help. When my son wanted to go to university, people were found who could advise on all aspects of the system - from finances to accommodation. Nothing is too much trouble.

Often just knowing NMC is here if and when an issue arises is a relief:



I know that should I ever encounter a problem there will be somebody to help, whether that's a member of staff or another service user who has had a similar experience.

What really stands out is how much we differ from other health settings. Our approach has always been to look at the whole person. Because of the nature of the conditions we treat, the relationship we have with an individual or family can be lifelong:



Attending NMC for the first time a few years ago was like coming home. At last - a team that fully understood my condition. A team of empathetic, knowledgeable, friendly + welcoming individuals who look at the wellbeing of each person as a whole. This is so different to any other medical advice/support where each specialist is only looking at their specialist area.

Those regular check-ins, whether that be a physio simply asking 'how are you?' at the beginning of an appointment or another of the staff team sitting down for 10 mins with a carer over lunch are so important.



DAN CUNDALL



enabling technology that meant those with physical disability, like Dan, had the potential to develop and compete on a level playing field with able-bodied graphic designers.

An indication of what a thinker and a force Dan was, is the house that he and his wife shared in the village of his birth. Dan designed the house from scratch. He oversaw its construction. In many ways it was his crowning glory. It was designed to work perfectly for their daily lives. It is attractive, functional and sits perfectly in the Cheshire countryside that he loved so much.

Dan was born in a tiny village a few miles from NMC. He was a younger brother to Matt. Both had Becker Muscular Dystrophy although this was not initially diagnosed. Matt worked at NMC as our Business Manager, and he died back in 2018.

Dan was the arty one of the two brothers. He graduated from Manchester Metropolitan University with a 2.1 BA Honours in Media Design. He joined the small team at NMC in the early 90's. Apple Macs were new on the graphic design scene. There was suddenly a very accessible and

Dan was always keen to spend time helping others – particularly young designers eager to refine their skills or simply see, through appreciating Dan's life, how they might forge a successful life and career for themselves.

As the years went by for hardworking Dan, he needed a few more aids and adaptations to enable him to continue to flourish. In a world where, quite naturally, people can be resentful of having to accept becoming a wheelchair user or needing the help of others to





D+P OLD OFFICE



D+P NEW OFFICE

do small tasks, Dan took a different view. He warmly embraced whatever bits of equipment came to be necessary. He took the view that they meant he could do the things he enjoyed.

Away from work Dan loved Formula One, Manchester United, cricket, Bob Dylan and the rock music of the 70's, and local history.

Dan was a powerful voice from a disabled man's perspective. Often challenging, always thought provoking and always full of thoughts that helped to mould the shape, style and ethos of this charity.

We miss him and will always warmly remember his humour, his insight, and his contribution to NMC.





NMC Design+Print Laser Creations

A NEW ENTERPRISE AT NMC

As we referred to in the introduction to the Social Accounts, one of the last actions that Dan Cundall took was to make the investment in a new laser cutting and engraving machine as a new arm of the business.

NMC Laser Creations, as it is now called, is creating new sources of income, and new pathways for employment, volunteering, and training.

As well as providing an opportunity to create a new, sustainable, viable business model, the new enterprise creates space to encourage a new hive of activity. It brings people together, gives chances to connect and find shared purpose, and affords a new level of creative freedom. This empowers the team, and the wider NMC community to have more say in what we can offer.



Laser Creations Coordinator, Ross, highlights some of the benefits of working with a laser engraver for people living with neuromuscular conditions.



Digital design and muscular dystrophy can both restrict your physical engagement with the world, but small-scale prototyping realises your design at a small desktop scale that allows many of us to touch or feel and smell materials, even with the profound physical restrictions that some of us with MD experience, and I think that is valuable and can be forgotten.

Work is underway to launch ready-to-buy items, targeting gifting, home décor and gardening markets, and a complementary offering of bespoke options for existing Design+Print customers. We are looking for potential business-to-business and business-to-customer opportunities. We are also looking at smaller, custom items that are tailored towards the wedding and event industry. We are creating pathways to explore creative work in new ways and are reaching out to a larger audience than ever before.

New operating systems and working practices also offer opportunities to build skills and experience beyond the pre-existing design route. These processes include online marketing, product development and testing, engaging with the public at craft markets and building ties with the NMC community, to name just a few. All these new activities encourage ways of working that turn our attention outwards and necessitate creating more ties to the community and world around us.

A staff team member says



It [NMC Laser Creations] pushes us to get more involved with the wider community, spread the word about NMC and promote people with neuromuscular conditions as a capable, committed and creative workforce.

Another adds that being part of the team helps with



Getting out of the house and talking with different people.

The funding that allowed the launch of this project gave scope to hire a permanent member of staff to oversee production, and a part-time permitted earner to act as a support technician.

In the case study that follows, Ross explains what working at NMC means to him, and outlines the potential that NMC Laser Creations could unlock for the team, and the wider NMC community.





CASE STUDY

ROSS DALZIEL LASER CREATIONS COORDINATOR

DEVELOPING NMC LASER CREATIONS

When I had more mobility, I was an artist, technician and educator who ran a small studio providing laser cutting and engraving services to the local art and technology community of Liverpool before working and volunteering at a local makerspace; “DoESLiverpool”.

As my MD progressed, I was struggling to keep working independently and, because work can become a big part of your life, MD's impact can be difficult. I've always been preoccupied by the challenge of making a creative job pay the bills whilst also anticipating how Becker's MD, in later life, limits what you can do and how and where you can work. Being largely self-employed with long, low paid hours in the creative industries, I needed to shift into work that was much more open to safe and supportive working conditions as my condition progressed.

Employment at the NMC has let me continue to use and develop my skills and experience in visual and digital arts, digital prototyping and technical making culture. I feel it has extended my working life and, although I don't think work is the most important thing, I think it has profoundly benefited my health wellbeing and kept me and my family going.

The structure of the Design+Print social enterprise, and it being part of NMC with access to physiotherapy, gym, activities like Tai Chi and 3D printing, a supportive community and occupational therapy, has been ideal for my situation and I think I'd struggle to stay sociable, active and working without it.

My role within the team focuses on the development and day to day processes of NMC Laser Creations. After lockdown, the late Dan Cundall, then Head of Design, proposed investing in a laser cutter and engraver to build on the existing design expertise and develop new commercial capacity which would also integrate with the 3D print club's growing knowledge and abilities. My experience with these machines and creative technology in general, and the support of my professional networks at institutions like Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Liverpool John Moores University, and Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Arts (LICA) meant I could work with Dan, Ali, Ben and the rest of the team to develop the laser engraving, product development and digital making services that we now provide.

**“THERE IS A
PALPABLE FEELING
OF CAMARADERIE,
PERSEVERANCE,
POSITIVITY, JOY,
AND HUMOUR
I THINK IN THE
CULTURE OF THE
NMC.”**

This has been powerfully therapeutic for me, and it's also a lot of fun. There is a palpable feeling of camaraderie, perseverance, positivity, joy, and humour I think in the culture of the NMC. I benefited under the care and support of NeuroMuscular Centre for a few years before becoming involved as a volunteer, developing a 3D Print Club, that unexpectedly flourished under the difficult conditions of COVID lockdowns forcing the group online. Members of this club taught themselves 3D printing, with some buying their own machines. The club became friends and then as things progressed, some of them agreed to be research participants in my PhD research at Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Arts (LICA) supported by a research scholarship 2019-2022. My research focussed on developing strategies for working with art, design, digital making and biology, connecting members of the 3D Print Club with research scientists at the Lancaster Faculty of Health and Medicine at Lancaster University.

The laser cutter and engraver and the 3D printer are part of what has been called digital prototyping, DIY maker culture and, in some research, Independent Small-Scale Manufacturing which allows individuals and small and medium enterprises access to digital and physical tools to make and develop products which would otherwise require intense large scale capital investment. We used one of the earliest reliable importers of laser cutters, HPC in Halifax to supply the latest generation machine that could work accurately and safely in a warm and secure studio environment using the latest software, Lightburn.



ULTIMATELY, I SEE THE FUTURE OF THE LASER MACHINE AND THE 3D PRINT CLUB AS A WAY OF BRINGING TOGETHER AND BUILDING ON THE LEGACY OF ALL THE ONGOING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY WORK THAT, FOR ME, ARE THE KEY FEATURES OF HOW NMC WORKS.

Ultimately, I see the future of the laser machine and the 3D Print club as a way of bringing together and building on the legacy of all the ongoing social and community work that, for me, are the key features of how NMC works. The essential clinical care at NMC, design expertise and commitment to accessible lifelong education through Training and Shed Club, can potentially come together in new interesting ways, centred around this new technology, to expand the commercial side of the design business.

These technologies have the potential to be more than instrumental tools, used to make things or commodities. They can be used to encourage a community to flourish. Together, with these new creative tools, we have a unique offer that I think we can grow and develop into a thriving contemporary, creative hub and community of innovation and care. Through these processes, we can transform each other, making the world a more liveable place, whether the limits of society make you 'disabled' or not.



Neuromuscular Centre's (NMC) raison d'être is to improve the lives of those living with neuromuscular conditions and other degenerative muscle wasting conditions.

It is impossible to unequivocally state how life would have been without the NMC's intervention, but with Social Accounting we can gauge the impact of our work on various aspects including health, and how that intervention affects an individual's relationship with the NHS.

In the Big Survey 81% of respondents said that NMC impacted positively on keeping them away from GP and out of hospital, with 53% describing that impact as VERY positive.

The NMC's Physiotherapy Department only accepts referrals from NHS clinicians on the basis of clinical need. Those Consultants, GPs, or other Physiotherapists refer to the NMC because there aren't appropriate services available within the NHS. A motivation for the establishment of the NMC over 30 years ago, that regular, proactive physiotherapy for adults with neuromuscular conditions

was not available remains the case, with NHS physiotherapy, when provided, most often being a short-term course of treatment in response to a specific injury.

Our wait times before we see someone who is newly referred is averagely only 4 weeks. We are very aware that NHS waiting times for things like pain clinics or orthopaedics are averaging 4-5 months. This initial contact with NMC can be with the person alone, or with their partner, or with the whole family if they choose. This speed of NMC response is also key to potentially reducing falls, tackling debilitating pain management issues quickly, and establishing health and fitness priorities much quicker.

Through the Social Accounts process of previous years, NMC has established that patients glean benefits including but not limited to the following:

- Improved mobility and function.
- Fewer falls and injuries.
- Fewer chest infections.
- Specialist provision of manual lymphatic drainage.
- Better pain management.

Favourable consequences of these outcomes include:

- Greater independence.
- Improved confidence.
- Playing a more active role in the lives of their dependants.
- Building friendships and relationships.

In addition to the obvious advantages for the patient, this ultimately impacts NHS services positively due to:

- Fewer GP visits.
- Fewer unplanned hospital admissions.
- Less impact on tertiary NHS services.

And more broadly, other advantages include:

- Patients remaining in paid employment.
- Patients have access to equipment and home adaptation advice.
- There are better links between health and social care agencies.
- Greater support for carers of patients.

NMC's intervention has clear benefits for the NHS organisations with which it deals:

- It provides a clear care pathway for GPs/Health Professionals who have patients with neuromuscular conditions.
- It supports ICBs in meeting their strategic obligations to this group of traditionally hard to reach patients.
- It provides expert, high-quality intervention to individuals affected both directly and indirectly by neuromuscular conditions.
- It reduces the time and cost impact on local NHS services by providing ongoing support to these individuals – patients are never discharged until their next point of crisis.
- It meets desired outcomes and clearly measures success.
- It keeps patients and other key stakeholders at the heart of decision making.

IMPACT ON THE NHS...



THE BIG SURVEY

This year's Big Survey asked directly what patients thought the impact of NMC's intervention was in keeping them away from the GP or out of A&E.

Of 131 respondents, 75 marked it as 7/7 and the average score was 6.15 out of 7. This is not the norm for people with neuromuscular conditions. Some historical statistics from the national charity MDUK found that someone with one of these conditions has an almost 40% chance of an unplanned hospital admission each year (MDUK Building on the Foundations – Invest to Save 2011).

Of NMC's cohort, the figure is **5%**

According to the King's Fund (Key facts and figures about the NHS – 2023), the average 9 minute face to face GP consultation cost £48. The average cost of someone being taken to A&E by ambulance is £367 and the cost of being in A&E is between £86 for low level input and £418 for more complex cases. Hospital stays can cost between £400 and £2,000 a day depending on the level of care required. It's quite clear that hospitalisation and regular GP consultations can be very costly for the public purse.

Comments from those completing the questionnaires this year included:



It improved my general health and wellbeing also keeps me fitter than I otherwise would be without their help.



The more treatment I can get the less I'm having to ask the GP for pain medication.



I haven't seen my GP personally for years. The NMC understands the condition and its effects much more than any GP. The NMC also enables me to understand what is happening and why, with a range of strategies to keep me safe and as mobile as possible. When there is deterioration, there are gentle prods in the right direction with a range of interventions to help manage the downturn.



Help to fall less.



Helps me maintain some physical strength and avoid falling.



Keeps me away from the GP in terms of I don't get as many back and neck pains.



I am able to seek advice with regards to pain, which saves me a call to the GP. The exercises help me to manage my balance and strength, which I am sure has reduced the number of falls I have had. Exercise also has a positive effect on mental health.

A challenge for the NHS is the lack of time it has for individual patients, and that is probably the main observation our community would have of local NHS services. As we don't discharge, we are able to build a relationship with the patient and see beyond the symptoms of their condition. It allows us to dig deeper and offer a more co-ordinated intervention which looks more closely at peoples' circumstances. In doing so we can assess conditions at home, offering advice on home adaptations and equipment.

According to the NHS over half of falls happen at home. Unaddressed fall hazards in the home are estimated to cost the NHS in England £435 million and the total annual cost of fragility fractures to the UK has been estimated at £4.4 billion which includes £1.1 billion for social care. The dearth of services for people with neuromuscular conditions means they are inevitably likely to be a contributor to those costs.

The following comments are in response to NMC's interventions with help at home:



They have helped with adaptations, equipment, and advice over lots of things. I.e., latest adaption on verge of renewal got grant, but advice of the Closomat toilet very useful indeed.



Rails in the house, new mobility van with ramp. All advice given and signposted how to get support.



NMC was very supportive before/during adaptations we had in our bungalow 10 years ago. Also gave us great advice about equipment purchases.



Gave confidence and clinical expertise and backup for disabled facilities grant for access and bathroom.



Some help with an adaptation to my bathroom. Process had been stalled for 3 years.



I have had advice on a new bathroom and am currently in the process of getting some adaptations made to accommodate a powered chair.

Whilst the numbers are relatively small, the feedback received suggests NMC's proactive approach can serve as a model on which services can be based to reduce avoidable hospitalisation and unnecessary use of general practice, saving money and time, and improving wellbeing as it does so.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

NMC is acutely aware of many aspects of its environmental impact. Equally we are certain there are many elements of our building, our behaviours, and our operation which we must work on as we seek to operate in the most effective way for the health of our community and for the wider health of our planet.

Let's start with an appreciation of some of our main challenges in achieving a low carbon footprint:

People in our community are generally unable physically to cycle or walk to NMC. Very few people in our NMC community live nearby to NMC. As the only Centre in the UK, people routinely travel up to 100 miles to attend the Centre.



The Centre is always kept warm because that is essential for the health of those attending. Our heating system is gas.



Disability aids in the Centre like hoists and bidet toilets require additional power usage. Power wheelchairs and breathe assist machines all need charging up from time to time – sometimes at NMC.



People mainly travel in their own car to the Centre. Some come to the Centre on NHS Patient Transport (ambulance) and a very few by public transport or taxi.



Many of the cars that people drive are, of necessity, larger and adapted causing increased fuel usage.



NMC is not on a bus route and is over 3 miles from the nearest railway station in one direction and over 5 miles away in the other direction.



Our own minibus fleet is diesel powered and is an expensive asset that we do not plan to replace for some years.



We do not currently have any electric car charging infrastructure.



SOME OF THE THINGS WE THINK WE DO WELL IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



We have high levels of insulation and have rebuilt parts of the Centre to provide far more effective insulation.



We have a solar panel installation which is particularly suited to our 9.00 to 5.00 type of operation. We have very small electricity usage overnight.



We have a good recycling and waste segregation culture.



We have a woodshed team recycling previously used timber into useful items.



We grow fruit and veg and share the produce in our community to encourage healthy eating and reduced food miles.



We have planted over 100 trees on our 1.5 acre meadow.



We have cycle racks.



We have upgraded the showers which are available for everyone in our NMC community including staff.



We monitor fuel usage in our minibus fleet and encourage economical driving techniques.



We have a boiling water tap for hot drinks. We do not routinely use kettles.

We used a lot of single use disposable plastics during the pandemic. Aprons, gloves and test kits are now much less part of our Centre waste as Covid-safe working practices evolve, and are refined, to reflect the latest knowledge about vectors and risks for spreading.

NMC has a good awareness of the B-Corp standard for businesses and the obligations and expectations that it places on businesses to engage with charities in meaningful and mutually constructive ways. NMC is ready to enter into such collaborations.



NMC'S CARBON FOOTPRINT RESULTS FOR 2022-23

(USING CARBON TRUST CALCULATOR)

W We have sought to assess our carbon footprint for the first time this year.

Using the Carbon Trust's online calculator we have input our 4 streams of carbon usage:

- Diesel for our minibus fleet.
- Specialist gas for the air conditioning plant in the gym
- Electricity (net of solar power generation)
- Gas for heating

We have tried to understand

some context and comparison for NMC's Carbon Footprint. A UK specialist company in this field ESP PRO Ltd offer a suggested average carbon footprint for an office based SME with 10 employees. They suggest that such an organisation would have an average carbon footprint of 3.7 tonnes per employee per year.

Whilst we do have 38 employees, many are part time so we have calculated that we have 12 fulltime equivalents. For NMC our annual carbon footprint per FTE is 3.5 tonnes – just a little below the suggested average/norm.

Our electricity usage per year is 30,000 KWh. Of this our solar installation generates 5000 KWh – about one sixth of our total usage. This analysis is something we had not previously looked at and it has been helpful in focusing our minds on where we use electricity, how we might reduce consumption, and whether or not we should invest in more solar generation.

Our Feed In Tariff also generated income of £181 over the year which further offset our electricity bill by 5% and provided carbon free power to the grid.

Our electricity use seems high and worthy of further investigation and analysis.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

STAFF SPEND

Our total spend on salaries and pensions amounted to £737,788 for the year.

We have 38 staff (12 FTEs). We appreciate how beneficial it is for our local economy if we have staff living locally who, through their spending, support local business and employment.

Of our staff team 27 live in Cheshire (within 20 miles of NMC)

Other staff live in Stoke and Shropshire.

- 4 live in Wales
- 4 live in Greater Manchester
- Other staff live in Stoke and Shropshire.

NMC is also exceedingly focused on enabling our community to be as economically active as possible. A high proportion of NMC's community are in paid employment and contributing National Insurance and Income Tax. As you will see elsewhere in these Social Accounts there is substantial evidence that NMC is having a positive impact on enabling many people to get work or stay in work, and hence NMC is having a positive impact on public finances.



NON STAFF SPEND

We are always keen to spend our money with small local suppliers and trades people if we can. This has been a steadfast objective of NMC for many years. We seek to support our local (within 50 miles) economy and make buying decisions with this factor high up the decision tree.

We spent a total of £290,800 with suppliers in the 2022-23 year. This is non staff spend. Almost exactly 50% of this non staff spend we define as discretionary and 50% is non-discretionary. A non-discretionary item includes things like insurance, utility bills, and specialist software. Discretionary spend is all those things where we can source supply locally and will do so provided quality is satisfactory and price is not prohibitive.

Of the discretionary spend total of £145,400, 66% was spent locally in 2022-23. This figure was 63% 2021-22

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These Social Accounts have sought to establish the impact that NMC has on the lives of people affected by neuromuscular conditions who have some relationship with the charity.

We have also tried to assess how well we live up to our values and the impact we have on the environment and local economy.

Overall we feel we have presented some strong evidence of the level of impact NMC has and the range of that impact.

We have shown that across a wide range of factors from health to pain and from confidence to friendship, NMC's impact has been

very positive for a large number of people. We always want to do more and in the year ahead we hope to build new strong services to be able to support housing issues even more and to support issues of employment even more. These are the two key areas that will be at the heart of next year's Social Accounts.

We also fully acknowledge and agree the improvements and actions included in the Social Audit Panel statement and report. We are always learning how to do Social Accounting and Impact measurement better. 16 years experience is not sufficient to give us all the answers and all the tools.

We hope you've enjoyed reading these Social Accounts and that they have given you a much deeper understanding of the work of this charity and the challenges faced by so many people affected by neuromuscular conditions.



Annual Report and **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

NeuroMuscular Centre

Company Limited by Guarantee

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

TRUSTEES

M Hawes
I Martin
D Okell (Chair)
M Roberts (not a director)
W Stothart
S Monteiro
W Duckworth
R Diaz

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

M Lanham OBE

SECRETARY

B Dale

CHARITY NUMBER

1023606

COMPANY NUMBER

2806607

REGISTERED OFFICE

Woodford Lane West
Winsford
Cheshire
CW7 4EH

AUDITORS

BWM
Tempest
Suite 5.1
12 Tithebarn Street Liverpool
L2 2DT

BANKERS

Barclays Bank Plc
21 Dingle Walk
Winsford
Cheshire
CW71AG

Nationwide Building Society
5 - 11 St Georges Street Douglas
Isle of Man
IM99 1AS

SOLICITORS

Barrow & Cook
5-7 Victoria Square
St Helens
Merseyside
WA10 1HH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

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 memorandum and articles of association (as amended 17 October 2019), 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 NMC is the Centre of Excellence for people affected by neuromuscular conditions.

CHARITABLE OBJECTS

The objects of the NMC are to promote and provide opportunities for people with a neuromuscular condition to live fuller lives through training, employment and physiotherapy, together with advice and support for themselves and their families and carers.

MISSION

The NMC's mission is to work together with people affected by muscle diseases, creating an environment where full potential and positive wellbeing are achieved, through employment, training, support and physiotherapy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The NMC aims to be largely user led and to provide a range of services for people affected by muscle disease. Although service users are predominantly from within a 100 mile radius of Winsford, Cheshire, many attend the Centre from across the UK and Europe. The range of services includes:

- Physiotherapy assessments
- Physiotherapy treatments
- Hydrotherapy
- Active exercise programmes
- Advice and support
- Supporting families in transition
- Provide personal care
- Support and breaks for carers
- Training courses in Graphic Design, Animation, Music and Photography
- Other Training courses
- Employment opportunities in Graphic Design (in the Social Enterprise; NMC Design+Print), Administration and Fundraising.
- Provide transport for Students and Employees to enable maximum independence and opportunity.

The unique combination of services provided by the charity are offered directly to individuals and their families across the UK. Where practicable, physical management programmes are tailored to the needs of each individual, depending on their type of dystrophy and physical condition, through regular sessions of

physiotherapy and hydrotherapy. As a 'centre of excellence' in the physical management of muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions, the charity offers help and advice to other organisations worldwide.

The charity has established a well-respected graphic design business, NMC Design+Print, in which the variety of skills and talents of the individuals can be employed, developed and rewarded under both salaried and permitted work arrangements. The NMC provides wheelchair-adapted transport for individuals attending the Centre.

NMC STRATEGY FOR 2022-24

During the past year we developed 6 new strategic objectives for NMC;

Objective 1 - Provide impactful social and academic opportunities for our community

Objective 2 - Enrich the emotional and physical wellbeing of people affected by neuromuscular conditions

Objective 3 - Inspire, inform, and enable our community to make an active contribution to society

Objective 4 - Develop a thorough understanding of people in our community and respond in tailored ways

Objective 5 - Run an effective and professional organisation with excellent governance with sustainability at the core

Objective 6 - Increase awareness of MD and NMC and increase our influence

VOLUNTEER HELP

NMC has a strong group of volunteers working in:

- Fundraising - mainly helping at events.
- Physiotherapy - helping and supporting the professional Physiotherapists.
- Board of Trustees - providing scrutiny, oversight, advice, guidance, and strategic direction.
- Also, we have volunteers helping with carpentry, gardening, odd-jobs and building maintenance.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The charity trustees consider that they have complied with their duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission and that the benefits that the charity provides are not unreasonably restricted.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022-23

1. A greater focus on diversity and inclusion beginning with a Trustee Workshop session on the theme of “Do I belong?”. **Achieved**
2. A major investment and diversification with Design and Print. A new laser cutter is being purchased to open a range of new products and design solutions for custom. **Achieved**
3. We continue to develop our outdoor space to maximise wellbeing with individually maintained and designed mini-gardens/planters. **Achieved**
4. For our staff team we are mindful of the cost of living crisis and commit to being as responsive as possible to ensure our team are retained and are able to have thriving lives. **Achieved**
5. Continue to strengthen and diversify our support offerings for mental health improvement and gener wellbeing. Pilates, art therapy and yoga feature as new elements in the plan for the year ahead. **Achieved**

6. We plan to extend our range of support by developing groups that are themed around those newly diagnosed, or new parents, siblings and those considering having a family.

Achieved

7. Introduce new services such as manual lymphatic drainage and podiatry. **New footcare service established. No progress with manual lymphatic drainage provision.**
8. Explore the provision of accessible accommodation near to the NMC. **Whilst this remains firmly in our plans, we have done only very limited work to progress it in the past year.**

FUNDRAISING PERFORMANCE

- Trust and corporate income £353k
- Community donations £157k
- Events income £63k
- Statutory income £490k
- Design+Print income £96k

FINANCIAL REVIEW

- NMC's financial performance has been satisfactory as we continue to build back post-pandemic.
- The NMC has some assets in the form of the building it has on land leased from Cheshire West and Chester Council but no up to date valuation is available
- NMC holds no other substantial asset beyond its minibuses, day to day office, physio and IT equipment.
- NMC has consistently maintained total unrestricted reserves at 3 month running costs throughout 2022-23.

RESERVES POLICY

NMC recognises the need to build and maintain adequate reserves, to ensure that the charity has a financial buffer proportionate to its normal scale of operations. In doing so, this will reduce the financial risk to the charity and help ensure that its services are sustainable.

The policy sets out a goal of staying above the following thresholds:

1. A minimum amount of total unrestricted reserves of £250,000
2. A minimum amount of net current assets of £130,000 of which cash and marketable investments must not be less than £90,000

The overall total is equivalent to approximately 4 months of annual spend and approximately 6 months of annual payroll. The Trustees believe that this is a reasonable and proportionate "buffer" to retain against the risk of unseen problems.

The current reserves level is £1,283,781, with free reserves being £545,084 and restricted reserves being £11,150.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A register of risks is maintained and reviewed regularly by the Trustees.

The following risks have been identified as the most significant for the charity:

- Financial sustainability; recognising that maintaining income levels is essential to the charity's financial sustainability. The charity continues to monitor the risks associated with its diverse voluntary income streams.
- Reputation and brand; the charity monitors the risks associated with all aspects of reputation and has put in place strategies to reach and engage with beneficiaries and other organisations.
- Recruitment and retention of staff: the charity aims to be an organisation where staff are supported and developed and where employees have a sense of fulfilment. During the year all managers participated in a bespoke management development programme to extend their skills.

PLANS FOR 2023-24

1. Following the pandemic and a lot of staff changes, we will give focus to developing and consolidating the new young team members we now have. We will seek to encourage mentoring. We will seek to strengthen the youth/ experience balance.
2. Following the death of the pivotal leader of NMC Design+Print in 2022 we will seek to rebuild, restructure, and refocus the social enterprise for a thriving future.
3. Succession planning for long service senior staff is a key priority in the coming year.
4. Explore the provision of accessible accommodation near to the NMC.
5. Continue to develop and exploit the opportunities provided to NMC Design+Print following the investment in the Laser cutter/engraver.
6. Hold special events and make investments in key personnel to help the NMC community tackle the personal post-pandemic challenges. These include issues of housing, employment, support, physical and emotional health.
7. Improve outdoor accessibility onsite. This includes relaying the car park and re-furbishing and extending accessible paths and boardwalks.
8. Develop a new Fundraising Strategy to reflect changes in society, the marketplace for events, our changed capacity, and the end of our long running Spirit of Christmas fundraising event.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Neuromuscular Centre (NMC) is a registered charity, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. The charity registration number is 1023606 and the company registration number is 2806607. The NMC has a wholly owned dormant subsidiary, NMC Trading Limited.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

G Edwards (Resigned 28 April 2022)
M Hawes
A Jeffs (Resigned 13 April 2023)
I Martin
D Okell (Chair)
M Roberts (not a director)
W Stothart
S Monteiro
W Duckworth
R Diaz

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The charity appointed its Board of Trustees from 1 April 2012. As vacancies arise new Trustees are appointed.

TRUSTEE INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Newly appointed trustees receive comprehensive induction including training on their duties and responsibilities under company and charity law and also an induction into the activities, operational plans and financial performance of the charity.

ORGANISATION

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the management of the Neuromuscular Centre. The Board will meet quarterly. A Chief Executive, with delegated authority, is appointed by and accountable to the trustees for managing the day-to-day operations of the NMC and the delivery of operational plans.

The remuneration arrangements for all staff are reviewed annually by the Chair of Trustees and Chief Executive having benchmarked pay levels in the relevant employment roles and sectors and mindful of changes to the UK cost of living indices. The Trustee Board approve the overall remuneration settlement as part of the annual budget setting.

AUDITOR

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that BWM 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.

SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board of trustees



D OKELL (CHAIR)

Trustee
Dated: 27th July 2023

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

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and

- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of NeuroMuscular Centre (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 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 31 March 2023 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 ethic requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethic 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.

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.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and
- inspecting legal correspondence; and

- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;

- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting of documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- enquiring management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.


Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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.

OTHER MATTERS

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.



**Louise Casey ACA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of BWM**

Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditor

Dated: 23rd August 2023



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£
<u>Income from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	313,740	196,525	510,265	417,780
Charitable activities	5	585,132	-	585,132	491,070
Fundraising events	4	62,525	-	62,525	46,106
Investments	6	2,107	-	2,107	232
Other income	7	148	-	148	887
Total income		963,652	196,525	1,160,177	956,075
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds	8	145,157	-	145,157	116,495
Charitable activities	9	784,511	191,680	976,191	845,263
Total expenditure		929,668	191,680	1,121,348	961,758
Net movement in funds		33,984	4,845	38,829	(5,683)
Reconciliation of funds					
Fund balance at 1 April 2022		1,238,647	6,305	1,244,952	1,250,635
Fund balance at 31 March 2023		1,272,631	11,150	1,283,781	1,244,952

PRIOR FINANCIAL YEAR FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022
		£	£	£
<u>Income from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	3	343,786	73,994	417,780
Charitable activities	5	491,070	-	491,070
Fundraising events	4	46,106	-	46,106
Investments	6	232	-	232
Other income	7	887	-	887
Total income		882,081	73,994	956,075
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Raising funds	8	116,495	-	116,495
Charitable activities	9	750,121	95,142	845,263
Total expenditure		866,616	95,142	961,758
Net movement in funds		15,465	(21,148)	(5,683)
Reconciliation of funds				
Fund balance at 1 April 2021		1,223,182	27,453	1,250,635
Fund balance at 31 March 2022		1,238,647	6,305	1,244,952

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities. The movement in funds detailed above complies with the requirements for a statement of changes in equity under FRS102. The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.



BALANCE SHEET

	Notes	2023	2023	2022	2022
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		727,538		657,272
Investments	15		9		9
			<u>727,547</u>		<u>657,281</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	18	179,277		139,954	
Cash in bank and in hand		<u>529,824</u>		<u>537,853</u>	
		709,101		677,807	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	<u>(152,867)</u>		<u>(90,136)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>556,234</u>		<u>587,671</u>
Total net assets			<u>1,283,781</u>		<u>1,244,952</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted funds	22		11,150		6,305
Unrestricted funds represented by fixed assets		727,547		657,281	
Free reserves		<u>545,084</u>		<u>581,366</u>	
General unrestricted funds		<u>1,272,631</u>		<u>1,238,647</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>1,272,631</u>		<u>1,238,647</u>
Total charity funds			<u>1,283,781</u>		<u>1,244,952</u>

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by operating activities	27		84,129		(38,795)
Cash flows from investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(94,264)			
Interest received		2,107		232	
Net cash (used in)/ generated from investing activities			(92,157)		232
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(8,028)		(38,563)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			537,853		576,417
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			529,824		537,853

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 27th July 2023 and are signed on behalf of:



D OKELL (CHAIR)

Trustee

Company Registration No. 280660

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

CHARITY INFORMATION

The NeuroMuscular Centre is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales and a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The registered office is Woodford Lane West, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 4EH.

1.1 ACCOUNTING CONVENTION

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared on the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

The financial statements do not incorporate the results, assets and liabilities of the charity's wholly owned subsidiary, NMC Trading Limited. Consolidated accounts have not been prepared as these would not be materially different from the single entity financial statements as presented. The subsidiary ceased to trade on 1 April 2012 and has remained dormant throughout the period.

1.2 GOING CONCERN

At the time of approving the accounts 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 accounts.

1.3 CHARITABLE FUNDS

Funds held by the charity are:

Unrestricted general funds - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees, with due regard to the reserves policy as described in the Trustees' Report.

Designated funds - these are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 INCOME

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants, is included in income when these are receivable, except as follows:

- When donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods.
- When donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in income until the preconditions for use have been met.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

When donors specify that donations and grants, including capital grants, are for particular restricted purposes, which do not amount to preconditions regarding entitlement, this income is included as restricted funds when receivable.

Voluntary income includes discretionary grants for projects, goods and services where no service agreement or contract exists.

Other grants, which have particular service requirements and which are provided in accordance with a contract or service level agreement are included in the Statement of Financial Activities under the heading Charitable Activities.

Interest is included when receivable by the charity.

1.5 EXPENDITURE

Expenditure reflects all amounts paid and accrued during the year. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates. All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource.

Raising funds

These represent costs incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Charitable expenditure

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. Support costs are allocated across the activities on the basis of expenditure incurred for each of the activities.

Governance costs

These represent 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.

1.6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost, including any expenses of acquisition.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

- Short leasehold property
- Fixtures, fittings & equipment
- Straight line basis over the life of the lease Straight line over 4 - 5 years

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 FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

Fixed asset investments are stated at cost less provision for diminution in value.

1.8 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).

1.9 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.

1.10 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.

1.11 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

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

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.

1.12 RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The charity offers defined contribution pension arrangements to an employers' portable scheme. Contributions are charged in the financial statements as incurred.

1.13 TAXATION

The charity benefits from various exemptions from taxation afforded by tax legislation and is not liable to corporation tax on income or gains falling within those exemptions. Recovery is made of tax deducted from qualifying income and from receipts under Gift Aid.

The charity is also able to partially recover Value Added Tax. Expenditure that is not recoverable by the charity is recorded in the accounts inclusive of VAT.

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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
3 Donations and legacies						
Donations and gifts	313,740	196,525	510,265	308,442	73,994	382,436
Grants receivable	-	-	-	35,344	-	35,344
	313,740	196,525	510,265	343,786	73,994	417,780
Donations and gifts						
Community donations	157,159	-	157,159	129,009	-	129,009
Trust and corporate donations	156,581	196,525	353,106	179,433	73,994	253,427
	313,740	196,525	510,265	308,442	73,994	382,436
Grants receivable for core activities						
Job Retention Scheme	-	-	-	35,344	-	35,344
	-	-	-	35,344	-	35,344
4 Fundraising events						
Fundraising events	62,525	-	62,525	46,106	-	46,106

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total 2022
	Physiotherapy	Supporting employment		Physiotherapy	Supporting employment	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
5 Charitable activities						
Income within charitable activities	489,106	96,026	585,132	376,391	114,679	491,070
Analysis by fund	-	-	-			
Unrestricted funds				376,391	114,679	491,070
6 Investments						
Interest receivable	-	-	2,107	-	-	232
7 Other income						
Other income	-	-	148	-	-	887
8 Raising funds						
<u>Costs of generating donations and legacies and events</u>						
Promotion	-	-	57,653			38,580
Staff costs	-	-	84,477			74,301
Support costs (see note 10)	-	-	3,027	-		3,614
	-	-	145,157	-	-	116,495

Other income of £148 (2022: £887) relates to a Feed-in Tariff (FIT) payment received from the charity's energy provider.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Physiotherapy	Advocacy and care support	Supporting employment	Training	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	
9 Charitable activities						
Staff costs	283,329	76,432	36,466	14,526	410,753	353,205
Share of support costs (see note 10)	86,762	323,198	114,399	28,927	553,286	483,514
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	3,038	3,038	3,038	3,038	12,152	8,544
	373,129	402,668	153,903	46,491	976,191	845,263
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	325,693	258,424	153,903	46,491	784,511	
Restricted funds	47,436	144,244	-	-	191,680	
	373,129	402,668	153,903	46,491	976,191	
For the year ended 31 March 2022						
Staff costs	216,684	76,824	45,450	14,247		353,205
Share of support costs (see note 10)	78,456	255,461	130,353	19,244		483,514
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	2,136	2,136	2,136	2,136		8,544
	297,276	334,421	177,939	35,627		845,263
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	289,986	246,569	177,939	35,627		750,121
Restricted funds	7,290	87,852	-	-		95,142
	297,276	334,421	177,939	35,627		845,263

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	Support costs	Governance costs	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
10 Support costs						
Staff costs	242,558	-	242,558	232,871	-	232,871
Depreciation	23,999	-	23,999	19,794	-	19,794
Utilities and communications	30,527	-	30,527	19,853	-	19,853
Travel	23,325	-	23,325	17,375	-	17,375
Printing	82,451	-	82,451	85,595	-	85,595
Maintenance	43,297	-	43,297	50,788	-	50,788
Insurance and general expenses	110,156	-	110,156	60,852	-	60,852
Audit fees	-	4,030	4,030	-	2,700	2,700
Accountancy	-	2,270	2,270	-	1,980	1,980
Legal and professional	-	5,852	5,852	-	3,864	3,864
	556,313	12,152	568,465	487,128	8,544	495,672
Analysed between						
Fundraising	3,027	-	3,027	3,614	-	3,614
Charitable activities	553,286	12,152	565,438	483,514	8,544	492,058
	556,313	12,152	568,465	487,128	8,544	495,672

Support costs are allocated on the basis of time spent/usage.
Governance costs are split equally between activities.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

11 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year (2022: £nil) and no trustees were reimbursed expenses (2022: none).

	2023	2022
	£	£

12 Auditors' remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

Fees payable to the company's auditor and its associates for the audit of the company's annual accounts

4,030	2,700
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All other non-audit services

2,270	1,980
-------	-------

	Number	Number
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13 Employees

Numbers of employees

The average monthly number employees during the year was:

Charitable activities	28	27
Fundraising	3	3
Administration	1	1
	32	31

Employment costs

Wages and salaries	627,138	571,742
Social security costs	47,291	35,173
Other pension costs	63,359	53,462
	737,788	660,377

Redundancy payments of £17,130 (2022: £695) were paid in the year.

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more (2022: none).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Short leasehold property	Fixtures, fittings & equipment	Total
	£	£	£
14 Tangible fixed assets			
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	1,035,041	248,429	1,283,470
Additions	65,184	29,080	94,264
At 31 March 2023	<u>1,100,225</u>	<u>277,509</u>	<u>1,377,734</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	380,504	245,695	626,199
Depreciation charged in the year	13,994	10,003	23,997
At 31 March 2023	<u>394,498</u>	<u>255,698</u>	<u>650,196</u>
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2023	<u>705,727</u>	<u>21,811</u>	<u>727,538</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>654,538</u>	<u>2,734</u>	<u>657,272</u>

All tangible assets are used in functions of the charity and are shown at written down cost. All material assets are used for direct charitable activities. The leasehold land and buildings are subject to a lease that has recently been renewed and will expire in August 2077.

	Notes	Other investments
		£

At 31 March 2022

		2023	2022
		£	£
Other investments comprise:			
Investments in subsidiaries	16	9	9

Name of undertaking and country of incorporation or residency		Nature of business	Class of shareholding	% Held Direct	Indirect
NMC Trading Limited	England and Wales	Dormant	Ordinary	100.00	

Name of undertaking	Profit/(Loss)	Capital and Reserves
	£	£
NMC Trading Limited	-	9

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
17 Financial instruments			
Carrying amount of financial assets			
Debt instruments measured at cost		676,692	662,204
Equity instruments measured at cost		9	9
		676,701	662,213
Carrying amount of financial liabilities			
Measured at amortised cost		23,210	12,172
18 Debtors		£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:			
Trade debtors		143,631	121,113
Other debtors		10,673	5,404
Prepayments and accrued income		24,973	13,437
		179,277	139,954
19 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
Other taxation and social security		11,842	11,628
Deferred income	20	117,815	66,336
Trade creditors		16,871	6,483
Amounts due to subsidiary undertakings		9	9
Accruals		6,330	5,680
		152,867	90,136
20 Deferred income			
Total deferred income at 1 April 2022		66,336	864
Amounts received in year		117,815	40,794
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities		(66,336)	864
		117,815	66,336

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

21 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

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.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £63,359 (2022: £53,462).

22 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

Movement in funds

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Physiotherapy fund	-	12,875	(7,290)	5,585	41,851	(47,436)	-
Support worker fund	-	21,165	(20,445)	720	26,056	(26,776)	-
Transition and development	27,453	39,954	(67,407)	-	69,618	(58,468)	11,150
Bathroom project	-	-	-	-	59,000	(59,000)	-
	27,453	73,994	(95,142)	6,305	196,525	(191,680)	11,150

Physiotherapy fund - a core service of the NMC, this fund ensures the department has modern equipment with which to provide innovative and specialist treatments.

Support worker fund - this role provides a range of services including equipment and adaptation advice, guidance on benefits and work assistance, and emotional support in times of need.

Transition & Development Fund - meeting the growing demand from younger people, NMC now provides services to support them into adulthood, with independence, work readiness and personal growth being key aims.

The Bathroom project renovated the Centre's toilets and showers, replacing 25 year old facilities with the latest, state of the art equipment to provide maximum comfort for our visitors and inspiration for members of our community who may need to adapt their homes as a consequence of their condition.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

23 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	727,538	-	727,538	657,272	-	657,272
Investments	9	-	9	9	-	9
Current assets/(liabilities)	545,084	11,150	556,234	581,366	6,305	587,671
	1,272,631	11,150	1,283,781	1,238,647	6,305	1,244,952

24 Operating lease commitments

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:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	1,196	1,196
Between two and five years	598	1,794
	1,794	2,990

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

25 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel, is as follows.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Aggregate remuneration	<u>71,357</u>	<u>69,930</u>

As at 31 March 2023, there is a creditor balance owing to the wholly owned subsidiary NMC Trading Limited of £9 (2022: £9).

There were no other related party transactions. No guarantees have been given or received.

26 Company limited by guarantee

The Neuromuscular Centre is incorporated under the Companies Act as a company limited by guarantee.

The liability of the members is limited to £1.

	2023	2022
	£	£

27 Cash generated from operations

Net income for the year (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	38,829	(5,683)
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Adjustments for:

Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(2,107)	(232)
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	23,999	19,794

Movements in working capital:

(increase) in debtors	(39,323)	(82,371)
Increase in creditors	11,252	4,155
Increase in deferred income	51,479	25,542
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>84,129</u>	<u>(38,795)</u>

Social Audit STATEMENT

The Social Audit Panel has examined the draft Social Accounts submitted to us and discussed them in detail with Matthew Lanham (CEO of the Neuromuscular Centre) at the Social Audit Panel meeting held on 14th November 2023.

I have examined the revised Social Accounts which were prepared following the Social Audit Panel meeting and which have taken into account various points identified in the notes of the Social Audit Panel Meeting. We also examined a sample of the data and the sources of information on which the Social Accounts have been based.

We believe that the process outlined above has given us sufficient information

on which to base our opinion. We are satisfied that, given the scope of the social accounting explained in the revised draft and given the limitations of time available to us (the Panel is conducted over one day), the Social Accounts are free from material mis-statement and present a fair and balanced view of the performance and impact of the Neuromuscular Centre (NMC) as measured against its stated values and aims and the views of the stakeholders who were consulted.

The Social Audit Panel was unanimous in affirming that the accounts were clear, comprehensive and thorough.

We identified two key issues to be taken into consideration during the next social audit cycle. In particular, we would encourage:

- i) Alongside NMC refreshing their strategy and objectives in 2024, use this opportunity to restructure and refresh the social accounts, in line with the 8 key principles of social accounting.
- ii) NMC to develop and report against a refreshed impact framework – clearly reporting activities, outputs, outcomes

to show the full breadth and impact of work NMC are involved in.

The members of the Social Audit Panel were:

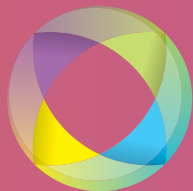
- (a) Sue Osborne, Chair of the Social Audit Panel,
- (b) independent consultant, facilitator and coach Neil Fletcher, formerly Director of Group Internal Audit for the Co-operative Group. Former Honorary Treasurer and NED for Riverside Housing Group.

- (c) Stefan Spinty, leading clinician working with neuromuscular patients at Alder Hey Children's Hospital
- (d) Karen Smith, Director of the Social Audit Network, supports grass roots social impact measurement in the Bolton area and beyond.



Dated: 5th December 2023
Chair of the Social Audit Panel





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