

Annual Report 2015

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Benefactors

Lloyds TSB Foundation
Comic Relief
Tyne and Wear Community Foundation
Gateshead Housing Company
European Social Fund
Gateshead Council Adult Services
Gateshead Adult Education
South Tyneside Council Adult Services
South Tyneside Adult Education
Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group
The Gateshead Fund
Awards for All
Hadrian Trust
Department of Health Volunteer Fund
Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund

Trustees

President Sir Nigel Sherlock

Vice President Mr A Veitch MBE (died 2015)

Chairman Mrs J Phipps* (Retired May 2015)

Vice Chairman Mr T Bryden*

Hon Treasurer Mr F Lewis*

Mrs D Richardson*

Mr M Collins*

Mr A Matthews*

Mrs D Smith

Mrs K Phillips*

Mrs E Turner*

Mr P Bennetts* *Trustees who have a sight loss/condition

Patrons

Ian Mearns MP, Emma Lewin- Buck MP, Stephen Hepburn MP

Lord Don Dixon, Baroness Joyce Quin, Denise Robertson

Strategic Management Team

Sue Taylor Chief Executive Officer

Susan Coulson Executive Director of Services

Maxine Munsey Executive Manager Training

Kerry Pattison Communication and Marketing

Lynn Ormiston Volunteering

David Scholfield Fiscal Officer

Chairman's Report

I have some satisfaction in reporting the year to 31st March 2015 has seen more consolidation for Sight Service.

We have made progress in redefining and improving operations and, despite an overall loss last year, we have been able this year to turn that around and the charity remains in reasonable shape for the foreseeable future. Our services delivered under contracts to the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group have consistently good reports, and we continue to make improvements to all our services.

Our two centres were both very busy during 2014/15 and with an increasing sight impaired population in both Gateshead and South Tyneside due to elderly macular degeneration and diabetes-related blindness these resources are important.

Our adult education, social, recreation and leisure services were well subscribed and our staff and volunteers who work with visually impaired people in the community have been busy as always but we still need GP surgeries and the NHS to know more about us.

The Report and Accounts explain that Sight Service has given over £570,000 worth of resource and services to Gateshead and South Tyneside and we are hugely grateful, as we have been since our foundation in 1996, to everyone for their continued support and generosity.

The work of Sight Service relies on its loyal, dedicated and professional staff; I must again thank them, and all of our wonderful volunteers without whom we could not function. My thanks are also due to our Chief Executive Officer, Sue Taylor who has worked immensely hard to keep the charity on track through the year. During 2014/15 we have said goodbye to some long serving trustees including Joyce Phipps and Kath Phillips, but I very much welcome new Trustees.

In short Sight Service remains both functional and relevant to the needs of its blind and partially sighted beneficiaries living in our area and we will be there for them for as long as we are needed.

Tom Bryden - Chairman

Chief Executive's Report

This has been another very busy year for Sight Service and one in which a number of achievements have been recorded – of which, more in a moment. We are, and remain, in a financially sound position, but with much of our funding coming from the local authority and health we are still threatened by the uncertainties which have characterised the past few years.

The new Care Act and unified disability allowances structure are making their presence felt, but not always in a positive way. As with so many of these Central Government initiatives, the application of new allowances and support schemes do not always make the best fit for individuals – and therein lies work for Sight Service.

We have been working closely with both Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils to ensure that the interests and needs of visually impaired people receive the levels of support they need. Examples of this are the on going discussions around transition of visually impaired young people from children and education services to adult services. A problem yet to be completely solved and the extension of our contract in South Tyneside, so we now provide all assessment rehabilitation and mobility services there. We continue to work closely with the NHS and especially the ECLO's in both Newcastle and Sunderland hospitals.

We are presently working closely in partnership with RNIB and Action for Blind People, looking at how we can be more joined up and deliver better services for more people, and we also continue to work together with our neighbouring organisations in the north east through Visionary North East. Our partnerships more locally with Age UK and Your Voice Counts have meant that we have been able to develop two new and exciting services, our Handyman Service and our Social Prescription service, both in their early stages at the moment, but hopefully going on to make a real difference.

2015/16 promises to be a landmark year in the history of Sight Service. Its our 20th birthday !! and we are moving into new and most exciting premises where we are aiming to transform our offer to visually impaired people in the area and in doing that reach many more visually impaired people than we are now..

The successes of Sight Service sits firmly at the door of all the people who have made it what it is today. Our past and present trustees, past and present staff and volunteers and our very many service users. Without all these people Sight Service would be a smaller and far less effective charity. We place a huge value on all our staff and volunteers, people who make so much possible in support of just over 4,000 visually impaired people across Gateshead and South Tyneside. To you I record a well-earned and very genuine “well done” and thank you..

Sue Taylor - Chief Executive Officer

Financial Report

Charity Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2015

FIXED ASSETS £61,858

Value of our main assets e.g. furniture, improvements and equipment

CURRENT ASSETS

Debtors & Prepayments £43,959

This is money due to us at the end of the year plus prepaid expenses

Cash at Bank and in Hand £82,816

Sub total £126,775

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Creditors & Accruals £41,307

This amount is owed out at the end of the year

Sub total £41,307

NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)

Net current assets / Liabilities £85,468

TOTAL NET ASSETS

All Assets less Current Liabilities £147,326

RESERVES

Our Accumulated surpluses to date £147,326

CHARITY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

This is summarised. The full accounts are available on request.

TOTAL INCOME £573,575

Less:

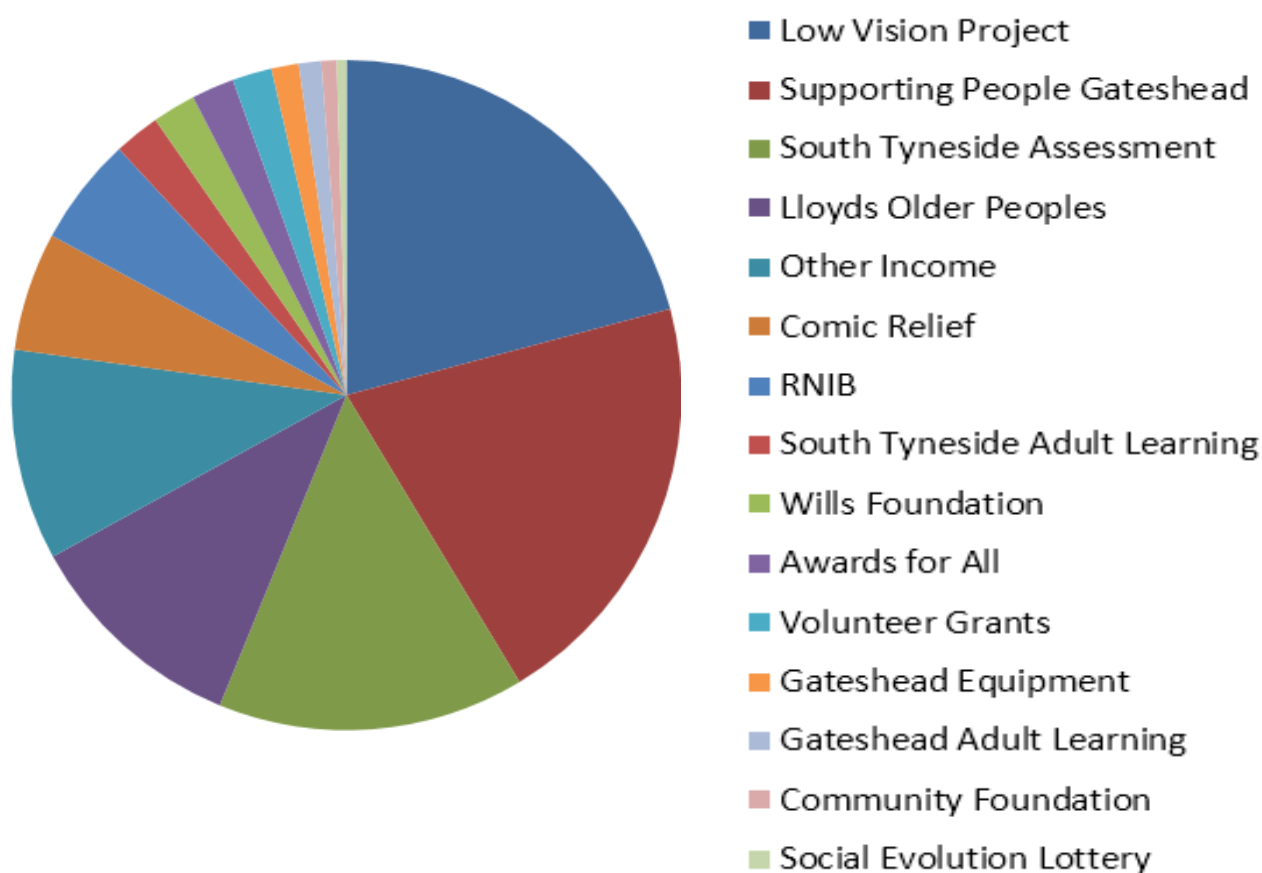
Salaries & National Insurance £265,552

Other Costs £307,932

Sub total £573,484

NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR £91

Income For The Year Ended 31st March 2015



Low Vision Project	£119,612
Supporting People Gateshead	£117,606
South Tyneside Assessment	£85,000
Lloyds Older Peoples	£62,100
Other Income	£58,340
Comic Relief	£32,800
RNIB	£30,000
South Tyneside Adult Learning	£12,681
Wills Foundation	£12,000
Awards for All	£11,804
Volunteer Grants	£10,972
Gateshead Equipment	£7,500
Gateshead Adult Learning	£6,250
Community Foundation	£4,250
Social Evolution Lottery	£2,660
Total	£573,575

Summary of Key Achievements in 2014/15

This report outlines key achievements against our seven Strategic Objectives.

Early intervention and prevention

Sight Service continues to ensure high quality visual rehabilitation and low vision services delivered by qualified specialist staff are available to people with sight loss across Gateshead and South Tyneside. This work links in with the national 'Seeing it My Way' standards;

The Equipment Stores in our two Resources Centers have been highly successful and sales of equipment have increased considerably.

With support from Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund we are now able to offer specialist welfare rights and advocacy support

Our new partnership with Newcastle Society for the Blind means that we are now able to share our expertise with our neighboring/sister organisation and we are reaching any more people, and reaching them earlier on their sight loss journey.

Emotional Support

The Your Sight ,Your Future courses for newly registered visually impaired people and our courses for Carers of visually impaired people continue to flourish. They share the same aims of providing advice and information, reducing social isolation, but also providing peer support, and emotional support. It is an exemplary, highly valued service.



Through our Peer Support programme service users are supporting other visually impaired people to better cope with sight loss.

Through our luncheon groups and other activities we continue to support friendships and reduce social isolation

Through our One to One Service (ring around, home-visiting and My Guide) we are reaching people who are truly socially isolated.

Community Inclusion

The Rehabilitation team continues to support people in developing their skills so that they can access their communities independently.

Our work with BEM and Jewish communities has enabled us to reach more hard to reach people.

Education and Influencing the Wider Community

We continue to offer our range of adult education funded courses.

Media coverage continues to develop; Talks to schools, community groups, and displays and events continued to be popular throughout the year, together with our Annual Exhibition.

We have delivered visual awareness sessions to Clinic Commissioning Teams, the GP practices, Hospital Trusts, Care Homes, other voluntary sector organisations and local businesses.

Prevention of Avoidable Sight Loss and Preventing the Effects of Sight Loss

Sight Service facilitates two Involvement Forums, with service users actively influencing and informing commissioning intentions.

In both Gateshead and South Tyneside we have worked with health and social care professionals and partners in developing the Eye Health strategy.



Our CEO sits on the North East Cumbria Local Eye Health Network

Children and Families

We provide a year-long activity programme for younger visually impaired people

Partnerships

We continue to work together with existing partners in Gateshead and South Tyneside, as well as with partners regionally and nationally.



www.sightservice.co.uk

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Charity No: 1107499