

York Blind and Partially Sighted Society
Holgate Villa
22 Holgate Road
York
YO24 4AB

Registered Charity 508914

Tel 01904 636269

Fax 01904 671154

E-mail enquiries@ybpss.org

Website www.ybpss.org

The front cover shows June Mangan, one of the users of our Equipment and Information Centre with the Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Irene Waudby looking at a CCTV. The occasion was the official opening of our new premises in January 2008.

Abbey Charitable Trust
A & S Burton 1960 Charitable Trust
Agricola Lodge 1991
Arnold Burton 1998 Charitable Trust
Clifton Parochial Church Council
Dave Dee Removals
Dean's Garden Centre
Forest Park Golf Club Ladies
George A Moore Foundation
Sir George Martin Trust
James Tudor Foundation
Joseph Rowntree Foundation
New Earswick Bowls Club
Norman Collinson Charitable Trust
N & P Hartley Memorial Trust
Leeds Building Society Charitable Foundation
McArthur Glen
Employees of Nestlé Rowntree at York
Provincial Grand Charity
Rank Foundation
Royal Victoria Trust
Skipton Building Society
Sovereign Health Care Charitable Trust
The Charles and Elsie Sykes Trust
The Charles Brotherton Trust
The Sydney Black Charitable Trust
The Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust
Tadcaster Grammar School
Ulverscroft Foundation
Wallis Business Services
William Birch & Sons Ltd (office staff Give As You Earn)
Francis Wynham Trust
York Common Good Trust
Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation
York & District Indoor Bowls Club
York Round Table
York Tyburn Trust

Albert Hunt Trust
A M Fenton Trust
Fulprint
Portakabin Ltd
Rotary Club of York
Minster Lodge
York Lodge
York Lions

Highlights of a year in which so much was achieved

This was a year of incredible progress, which meant so much to our members, staff and volunteers.

May 2007

The Lord Mayor of York chose us as one of her Charities

December 2007

We moved to new spacious and accessible premises

February 2008

Our application to the National Lottery was approved

They say things come in threes and this year was a perfect example. Three individually momentous events combined to move the Society forward in its mission: –

To advocate, develop and provide services and facilities to enable people who are blind or partially sighted achieve independence with dignity, in all aspects of life and sectors of society

The efforts of so many people have contributed to an exciting future for the Society, and for blind and partially sighted people in York who rely on our services. This report shows how more people than ever before are using our services, which is due in part to our move to spacious, ground floor premises. Next year, thanks to the National Lottery Funding, we will be able to use these premises to the full and offer a choice of social, support and learning opportunities that complement our existing services. We sincerely thank all our loyal supporters, members and staff who have worked so hard and achieved so much.

Bob Shead, Chair and Diane Roworth, Chief Officer

Our users are individual people with individual needs

Most people who are blind or partially sighted lose their sight in later life.

- **80% of 1,023 members** are over 65, **57%** are over 80

Most blind and partially sighted people have some vision

- No two visually impaired people see things the same
- Vision can be impaired in different ways, but mainly
 - A loss of central vision (an effect of Macular Degeneration)
 - A loss of peripheral vision (an effect of Glaucoma)
 - Cloudy, patchy or blurred vision (Diabetic Retinopathy can cause this)
 - Only able to see the difference between light and dark, or having no vision at all (can be caused by accident or illness)

Moving to accessible premises was an important step towards helping more people meet their individual needs. Here are two of the many heartening acknowledgements received this year:

“York Blind & Partially Sighted Society plays an important role in helping blind & partially sighted people to retain their independence in the City.” – Richard Tassell, Service Manager, City of York Council.

“As a long term wheelchair user, I have to say what a difference it made to me when you moved premises. I now have real ease of access to consistent support from volunteers and staff. Nothing is ever too much trouble and I know that equal time and caring is given to each individual.”

Proud to be the Lord Mayor's Chosen Charity

In May 2007 The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Irene Waudby, chose us as one of the two Charities she would support during her year in office.

The benefits to us were enormous.

- Hundreds, potentially thousands, of people heard about us and how we can help blind and partially sighted people in York
- Events as diverse as Flower Arranging, the Assize of Ale, a Golf Day, Valentines Ball and Fashion Show were held to raise money for us
- £11,000 was received during the year and there will be more to come in August 2008
- We held our Annual General Meeting at the Mansion House in September 2007
- The Lord Mayor officially opened our new premises in January 2008

The Lord Mayor's Charity Committee worked tirelessly to put together a fantastic fundraising programme. We would like to thank Cllr Irene Waudby (The Lord Mayor), Derek Waudy (Lord Mayor's Consort), Cllr Keith Hyman (The Sheriff of York), Karen Hyman (The Sheriff's Lady), Michelle Cundill, Geoff Taylor and Carys Harrison for giving up so much of their time in addition to undertaking their Civic duties.

We are proud to have been one of the Lord Mayor's charities and are extremely grateful to the entire Civic Party for their consistently enthusiastic support throughout the year.

New accessible and spacious premises at last!

A long held dream was realised when we moved to new premises in December 2007.

- In 2006 76% of members responding to a survey said they wanted ground floor premises with more space to display items
- In December 2007 we moved to new ground floor, spacious, accessible premises
- Between December 2007 and March 2008, there was a 27% increase in the number of visitors to the Centre
- Sales of equipment (on a not-for-profit basis) increased from £11,464 to £13,405
- We received fantastic support from our members, local companies, trusts and groups when we asked for help with the cost of moving
- £5,305 was donated by our members, £1,000 by Joseph Rowntree Charitable Foundation, £3,000 by Norman Collinson Charitable Trust and £500 by York Common Good Trust
- Dave Dee Removals donated chairs, desks and other furniture
- Harrowells provided pro bono time from a Solicitor and Native Chartered Architects provided pro bono time from an Architect to draw up our refurbishment plans (through Business in the Community)

Our Equipment & Information Centre helps more people

There is a world of difference between having full vision and no vision at all. Whatever a person's level of vision, staff at the Equipment and Information Centre will work with them to find the best solution for their individual needs.

More people than ever visited our Centre this year – 1,474 visitors compared to 1,243 last year. They bought equipment worth £13,405 compared to £11,464 last year.

Mary came to the centre and it was the first time she had been. She had age related macular degeneration (MD) which was affecting her central vision. It was difficult for her to recognise faces, read ordinary print, do simple tasks like threading a needle and making a drink. Mary's options were many and varied, and included

- Big Print newspaper and TV guide, a large print diary and calendar and information about getting her bank statements and bills in large print
- Advice on how good lighting could help her make the best use of her vision
- Self-threading needles so she could sew on buttons again
- A liquid level indicator which would stop her overflowing her cup when making tea or coffee
- Information on local subsidised transport schemes
- Information on how to get a low vision assessment and appropriate magnifiers on loan
- Details of our MD support group which is run by people with MD and offers peer support and information to other people with MD

Mrs Smith was worried about her mother-in-law who was 90 years old and experiencing deteriorating vision.

George wanted a mobile phone he could use – he didn't need text, just a large, easy to see keypad. We showed him two to choose from.

Sarah wanted information about accommodation for her visually impaired daughter who was moving away from home.

Stephen wanted a DAB radio he could use and a talking watch that looked like an ordinary watch. He was delighted to have several watches to choose from.

These are typical of the enquiries Fiona and Deborah (our Equipment and Information Officers) deal with every day, in person or over the telephone. We were able to help in all of these instances, plus many more, and if we can't help, we find someone who can.

This is the only such facility in York. Without it, people would not be able to see, try out and purchase equipment that can help them live independently.

A quote from a visually impaired volunteer at the Centre: –

“As a volunteer in the Equipment and Information Centre I am conscious of the warm welcome the staff give to all who come through the doors. With what seems like inexhaustible empathy and understanding, they search, always patiently, sometimes humorously, for the right piece of equipment to meet the needs of that particular person. Nothing is too much trouble. Recently I asked a friend, who is also visually impaired, and has complex problems, how he was doing. His answer was immediate and specific – “All right, thanks to this place. I couldn't manage without them!”

Helping Patients at York Hospital to see a future

It can be a real shock to be told that your eyesight has deteriorated and there is nothing that the medical profession can do to help. This is a situation faced by many patients at York Hospital Eye Clinic.

298 people were referred to Maggie, our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, because of their deteriorating vision.

Maggie works at the Hospital and is there to help patients through that difficult time by providing advice, information and both practical and emotional support.

She can link people into local services such as ours, make referrals for rehabilitation support or benefits advice, provide information on specific eye conditions and help people to cope with their change in circumstances. She is a vital member of the team at the Eye Clinic.

A quote from Roger Ellingham, Consultant Ophthalmologist at York Hospital: –

"The work of YBPSS is of immense importance to local people and the Hospital Eye Unit. We refer many patients each week to YBPSS, mainly those we register as Visually Impaired. YBPSS offers support in the form of listening, counselling and practical advice as well as the more obvious forms of support with Low Vision aids. This support helps avoid the social exclusion which many of our patients otherwise experience."

Maggie also runs a support group for people with Macular Degeneration. More than 45 people attend meetings every two months, and all help each other.

Volunteer Visitors provide essential support

50 volunteers provide practical help, emotional support and companionship to the people they visit. They are a vital link for many older blind and partially sighted people, who would otherwise become isolated.

Here is just one of the many successful matches made every year.

Doris, aged 87, was registered partially sighted with MD in 2007 and took the news badly as this was on top of other health problems. Her only daughter, who was her main carer, had died suddenly earlier in the year and when Doris was referred to us she was bordering on depression.

Linda works full time but was keen to do something in the community and volunteered for our Home Visiting Service. From the moment they were introduced, it was clear that they were going to relate well. Linda's weekly visits have helped Doris come to terms with her sight loss. Linda helps by reading and responding to her mail and identifying equipment that may help with everyday tasks. Various items have been bought or loaned such as a large button telephone, TV screen magnifier, and task lamp. Monthly tapes from the local talking newspaper service help Doris keep in touch with what is going on in the City. Although she still misses her daughter dreadfully, she is able to talk to Linda about her without getting distraught and recalls some of the happy times they shared together. Doris is extremely grateful to YBPSS for all the help she receives.

Keeping our members in touch and informed

Information is essential to everyone, **regardless of his or her visual ability, lifestyle or personal circumstances.** Without information, there is no choice. Getting the right information, at the right time, and in the right format can be difficult.

- 85 Information packs were sent to people who were newly registered as blind or partially sighted
- Over 1,000 newsletters were sent out free every three months, in large print, tape, Braille and computer formats
- We answered around 1,500 telephone requests for information
- We loaned electronic reading equipment to 35 people so they could read their own correspondence, newspapers etc

Active leisure time and meeting other people is important too.

- We visited Newby Hall and Beningbrough Hall and provided sighted guides for all who needed them
- More than 45 people attended each MD Support Group meeting
- We used Audio Description at York Theatre Royal and thank their dedicated volunteers for providing this
- We worked with York Art Gallery in providing Art Groups
- We provided premises for Greenshoots Gardening Group to meet
- We worked with North Yorkshire Fire Service to undertake free home safety checks for members
- 170 people received Talking Books and many were loaned radios and CD players they could use easily

Developing new services

We have been able to work with other groups and volunteers to develop new services.

York Integrated Low Vision Service is a joint pilot project between the City of York Council, North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust, The RNIB, The Department of Health, The Wilberforce Trust, and YBPSS.

The service offers a comprehensive low vision and rehabilitation assessment, and provision of low vision aids. It is available to anyone with low vision who would benefit and individuals can self refer.

Eccentric Vision Training for people with Macular Degeneration was provided from our premises in Holgate Villa. This is a joint project between the Macular Disease Society and us, using volunteers from our own MD Support Group. The training helps people with MD to identify areas of 'good vision' and develop techniques to use that vision to their advantage. Many people have found that this training has helped them to read again and that their reading speed increases through practice.

YBPSS Counselling Service. Changes in eyesight can sometimes be difficult to manage. Counselling is an opportunity to talk openly about emotional difficulties in a confidential and supportive environment. This service is in its early stages of development and offers free counselling to blind and partially sighted people and their carers.

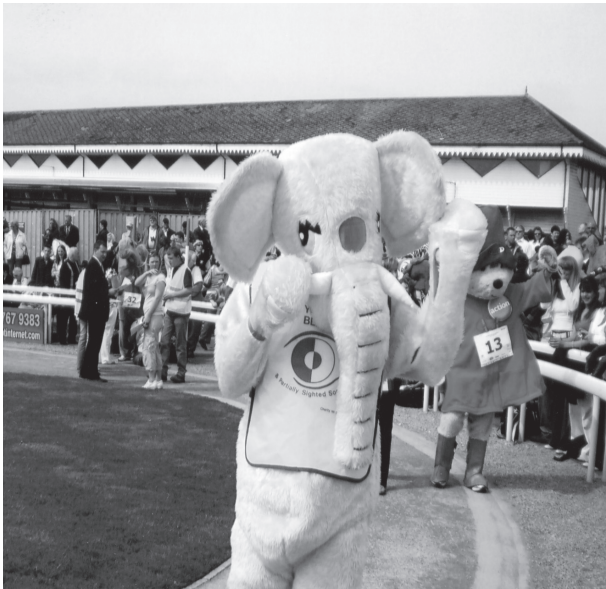
Next year we will be developing a greater range of social, leisure and learning opportunities for blind and partially sighted people in York.

Fundraising – our future depends on its success

During the year a fantastic £82,150 was raised from fundraising events and donations – 41% of our total income.

- **Our Members are extremely generous.** They gave £4,642 in regular donations and £5,305 towards our move to new premises
- **A legacy of £5,000** was very much appreciated
- **£14,117 was received in donations and gift aid**
- **Our fundraiser raised £52,187** including
 - **£4,500** towards our move to new premises
 - **£2,204** in Pink Elephant Collecting boxes
 - **£7,774** from Street and Store collections

We sincerely thank the local groups, trusts and organisations who made a gift, organised an event or provided support in some other way.



- Our Dragon Boat race team was provided by North Yorkshire Police
- A Flower Arranging evening was held with the demonstration provided free of charge by Lucia King
- Pupils from Tadcaster Grammar School arranged a Sponsored Walk

Our Pink Elephant runs in the Wetherby Mascot Race

We really could not have provided our services without their help. A fuller list is included on the inside back cover.

Our wonderful volunteers help us achieve more

Volunteers give enormous amounts of time, expertise and enthusiasm. They make it possible for us to do more to help blind and partially sighted people.

In June, the Lord Mayor of York presented 36 volunteers with certificates marking more than 5, or more than 10, years of volunteering with YBPSS.

- **At Home Service** volunteers deliver and demonstrate equipment to people who cannot visit our Equipment and Information Centre
- **Office volunteers** post out 1,000 newsletters every three months, make up information packs and undertake many different administration tasks
- **Volunteers** are essential helpers at activities like our MD Support Group, Annual General Meeting and social activities
- **Fundraising volunteers** help with collections, empty pink elephant collecting boxes, undertake sponsored walks, hold events, and raise 1,000s of pounds to put into services in York



A visitor and George, a volunteer, in our Equipment and Information Centre

Staff, Governance and Finances

An Executive Committee governs YBPSS; its members are the Trustees of the Charity. The Committee is elected annually and every effort is made to ensure a majority of members are visually impaired. Members were: –

Mr Bob Shead	Chair
Mr Mike Jones	Vice Chair
Mrs Mary Fairbrother	Honorary Secretary
Mr Alex Rough	Honorary Treasurer

Mrs J Agnew, Mr H Crawford (resigned Aug 2007), Mr M Crouch, Mr D Reibel, Mr J Scobie, Mrs E Shead, Mrs A Smith, Mr T Thompson, Mr S Unwin, Mr I Wood.

Staff members: - Diane Roworth, Chief Officer; Alison Cragg, Volunteer Co-ordinator; Deborah Wheller and Fiona Samuel, Resource Center Officers; Debbie Eade, Fundraising Manager; Maggie Martin, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer; Barbara Fairs, Office Manager; Alison Backhouse, Accounts & Talking Book Service.

YBPSS Accounts for April 2007 to March 2008

These summary accounts are compiled from the full accounts, independently examined by JWP Creers, Chartered Accountants. The full Trustees and Independent Examiners report can be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer or Charity Commission.

The Trustees are delighted with the very generous support of members, friends, trusts, donors, the City of York Council, and Selby & York Primary Care Trust (Now North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust). This ensures we continue to provide real help to blind and partially sighted people in York.

Summary Accounts for the Year 2007/2008

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2007/2008</u>	<u>2006/2007</u>
	£	£
<u>City of York Council</u>		
Volunteers Scheme	17,601	17,205
Resource Centre	16,621	16,247
Equipment Service	4,458	4,358
Talking Book Service	13,909	13,839
Total	52,589	51,649
 <u>North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust</u>		
Resource Centre	15,774	15,774
Eye Clinic Service	20,978	21,398
Total	36,752	37,172
 Total Service Agreements and Contracts	 <u>89,341</u>	 <u>88,821</u>
 <u>Grants and Other Income</u>		
D of H Opportunities for Volunteering	5,750	7,332
Talking Sign Project	-	1,573
Interest & Other Income Received	5,344	4,089
Social Activities	105	383
Training, Services and Equipment Hire	1,474	360
Resource Centre Sales	13,405	11,464
Legacies, Donations & Gift Aid	24,658	49,767
New Premises Member Donations	5,305	-
Fundraiser		
Lloyds TSB Charitable Foundation	-	10,000
Other Fundraising Income	47,687	43,370
New Premises Grants	4,500	-
Fundraiser Total	52,187	53,370
Total	<u>108,228</u>	<u>128,338</u>
Total Income	<u>197,569</u>	<u>217,159</u>
Restricted	62,712	81,627
Unrestricted	134,857	135,532
	<u>197,569</u>	<u>217,159</u>

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2007/2008</u>	<u>2006/2007</u>	
	£	£	
Salaries	118,735	108,977	
Staff Expenses (travel etc)	1,610	1,672	
Volunteer Expenses (travel etc)	588	490	
Office Expenditure (see note 1)	34,623	23,734	
Move to New Premises	22,176	-	
Recruitment and Advertising	2,599	3,084	
Social and other Group Activities	977	657	
Newsletter and Publications	2,597	2,660	
Fundraising and Publicity	1,926	786	
Talking Books Membership	11,461	11,880	
Resource Centre Purchases	14,546	12,588	
Council Equipment Purchases	1,537	3,232	
Opportunities for Volunteering Purchases	880	411	
Talking Signs & React Cards	-	195	
Depreciation	2,939	2,700	
Independent Examiners Fee	1,410	1,602	
Total Expenditure	218,604	174,668	
	Restricted	64,989	78,938
	Unrestricted	153,615	95,730
		218,604	174,668
Surplus/deficit for the financial year	(21,035)	42,491	
	Restricted	(2,277)	2,689
	Unrestricted	(18,758)	39,802
		(21,035)	42,491

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2008

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Tangible Fixed Assets		1,821	4,760
Current Assets			
Stock	7,348		6,447
Cash at Bank & In Hand	92,686		110,693
Debtors	1,500		1,300
		101,534	118,440
Liabilities and Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and Accruals		3,943	2,754
		97,591	115,686
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		99,412	120,446
Represented by			
Restricted Funds (see note 2)		15,180	17,457
Designated Building Fund (see note 3)		38,291	50,661
Unrestricted Funds		45,941	52,328
		99,412	120,446

Notes to accounts

1) Office expenditure includes rent, insurance, heat and light, telephone, stationery, postage, equipment repairs, staff training, subscriptions and sundry expenses.

2) Restricted funds can only be applied to the specific service or project. Restricted funds are such as The Eye Clinic Service, Council Equipment, Talking Books, and Opportunities for Volunteering.

3) The Designated Building Fund is a fund created to specifically procure and sustain new premises. This year the Building Fund has been used to cover the additional costs of moving to new premises.