

York Blind and Partially Sighted Society - Supporting Independence



Annual Report & Accounts 2012/13



Celebrating Achievements



Mentoring and
Befriending
Approved
Provider



LOTTERY FUNDED

Duke of York
Community
Initiative
Award



York Blind and Partially Sighted Society

Celebrating Achievements

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

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York Blind and Partially Sighted Society

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YBPSS – Celebrating Achievements and Making a Difference

Sight loss impacts on the lives of thousands of people in York–these are the people we are here to support.

This report celebrates our achievements in delivering the vital support services that enable blind and partially sighted people to live independently in their own home and in the community.

We successfully completed our five-year BIG Lottery project, developing many new activities along the way. The CES independent evaluation said we met all the outcomes, and exceeded all of BIG’s targets and that we **“make a real difference to the lives of blind and partially sighted people in York.”** Success indeed! During the 5 years...

- Over 8,995 people visited our Equipment and Information Centre, that’s 3,595 more than anticipated
- 282 people participated in social, leisure and learning groups, increasing confidence and well-being
- 2,523 people received 1-to-1 communication and technology demonstrations, our target was 700.

This year, we also celebrate

- Providing our Eye Clinic Service an extra day a week, thanks to funding from York Hospital and NY and YPCT
- Receiving the Duke of York Community Initiative Award, for the second time – a real accolade.

A challenging year lies ahead, but meeting the increasing needs of people with sight loss is what drives us. Thanks to all of our committed staff and volunteers, generous donors, private and public sector funders for making this year such a success. With their continued support, we will achieve again. Can you help too?

Diane Roworth, Chief Officer; John Wilson, Chair.

Individual people, individual solutions – our person centred approach

At YBPSS we understand the impact that sight loss can have, on the person themselves, their friends and family.

Sight is our primary sense, it's the one we depend upon and value the most. As much as 80% of information about our environment is gained from seeing, therefore the loss of sight has the potential to impact on many aspects of a persons life.

But, sight loss is a very individual issue. There are many causes of sight loss, each having different effects. No two visually impaired people will see things the same.

- Being blind does not always mean seeing nothing at all, most blind people can see something
- Some people have no central vision, whilst others have no vision to the sides
- Some people see a patchwork of blank and defined areas, others may see everything as a vague blur
- The most common cause of sight loss is Age Related Macular Degeneration, which results in a loss of central vision.
- Some people are born with impaired vision, but most people lose sight in later life, 80% of our users are over 65
- Sight loss can result from an accident or stroke, or illness such as diabetes. Some conditions are inherited.

We are in regular contact with over 1,060 visually impaired people in York. There may be another 1,000 people living with sight loss who could benefit from the services we provide.

We can help people adjust successfully to living with sight loss, to retain independence and to have choice and control in their daily life, whatever their level of vision.

YBPSS Equipment and Information Centre – helping people live with sight loss

I want to listen to my music, read the latest novel, cook a meal, do a Sudoku, catch a bus, go on holiday, find out what's on TV, look at photographs, use a mobile phone, email my grandchildren in Australia, surf the internet, manage my money, feel better about life...

These are some of the everyday challenges faced by visitors to our centre; challenges that our skilled and knowledgeable staff can help overcome.



“It’s a wonderful facility.”

“...an Aladdin’s Cave...”

1,860 people visited our centre this year, 194 for the first time. Every visitor received personally tailored help and support, including family members and supporters.

“This has come out of the blue for us, we are trying to understand the world of limited sight. Coming here has been so helpful confidence-wise, it has built my Mum up. It’s a one-stop shop, really fantastic and staff were so warm and welcoming.”

Over 300 items are on display, from simple black pens costing 35p to electronic readers which can scan and read aloud printed documents. A visit to the centre can ‘open the door’ to not only equipment, but local and national services that can help people have more choice and control in their life.

Peter is an elderly gentleman who lives alone in sheltered accommodation, his only relative lives in the south of England.

He is registered blind and experiencing deteriorating sight, and general health which makes everyday life much more difficult.

He wants to keep in touch with his sister and friends, to cook for himself, make drinks safely, and to be able to enjoy his love of music and interest in news and current affairs.

Over several visits, we have helped him with all of these – and more! He has been helped to:

- Make the best use of his remaining vision by increasing lighting and contrast levels in his home
- Make a hot drink, using a liquid level indicator and cook a meal using a talking microwave
- Contact his friends and relative using a big button phone
- Listen to music by marking the controls of his CD player
- Keep up to date with news and current affairs by loaning him an adapted radio from the Wireless for the Blind Fund, delivering it and showing him how to use it
- Try talking newspapers and books.

After a while, Peter found it difficult to manage correspondence even with electronic reading aids. This became stressful and worrying, so he was referred to our **Volunteer Visiting Service** for regular help with reading, and dealing with his post.

The overall outcome for Peter is a very positive impact on his day to day life, especially his leisure time which he now enjoys.

“Staff at YBPSS treat you as a person, you are not a disability on two legs. You are a person with needs, aspirations and dreams.”

Achieving more, by outreach and working with others

We work in lots of different ways, with lots of different people, to provide the right help, in the right way, at the right time:

- Our **At Home Volunteers** supported 69 people unable to get the centre. They delivered, and demonstrated equipment, changed batteries and helped with other difficult tasks.
- We sent out **1060 newsletters** every 3 months in large print, audio, Braille and email, and over **200 Information Packs** to people newly visually impaired.
- **We promoted Eye Health Week** at York Hospital and City Centre events.
- Staff worked alongside **Action for Blind People** on their mobile Resource Bus in the city centre.
- We loaned radio and audio equipment, from the **British Wireless for the Blind Fund**, to people on limited means.
- 143 people received **Talking Books** through funding from the City of York Council, allowing them to choose the most appropriate library service for them.
- Occupational therapists, student nurses and opticians, GPs, CPNs, The Falls Prevention Service, Age UK, City of York Council Sensory Impairment Service, the Wilberforce Trust, RNIB and Action for Blind People are some of the professionals and local and national groups we worked with.

On call at York Hospital Eye Clinic for patients and staff - Vanessa our ECLO

We celebrate the achievements of our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, Vanessa, caring for patients experiencing sight loss and helping them to see a future.

A diagnosis of permanent sight loss can be devastating, for the person themselves, but also their family and friends. Vanessa provides essential practical and emotional support when it's needed most, at the time of diagnosis.

“Whilst YBPSS cannot prevent sight loss, the practical and emotional support I received from Vanessa helped me face the future.” Quote from a patient.

- The service was available 1 extra day a week, thanks to funding from York Hospital and the Primary Care Trust
- There was a 20% increase in new referrals, from 601 to 715 plus hundreds of ongoing interventions
- Consultants and Optometrists value the service highly, regarding it as an integral part of their service to patients

The majority of sight loss is age related, but sometimes traumatic sight loss can be the result of an accident.

Sarah is one of the 715 new referrals to the service. She has mono-vision, but lived a very active and independent life for many years. A recent accident resulted in a severe loss of vision in her 'good' eye, threatening her independence and self esteem.

When Vanessa saw her on the medical ward, she was very despondent, finding it difficult to accept what had happened and resisting offers of help.

Vanessa listened through her fears and anxieties and they discussed her options, including the possibility of meeting other people with a similar experience.

Sarah and her friend Monica were introduced to York Blind and Partially Sighted Society and RNIB, and they attended a 2-day Finding Your Feet course at YBPSS. Small steps to independence began.

In Sarah's words – **“Vanessa saw me when I was in hospital and at rock bottom having lost my sight overnight through a freak accident. She lent me a talking clock so I could tell the time and helped me to feel that there could be a future for me.”**

Sarah and Monica will continue to receive support from YBPSS, for as long as they need it.

Staff in the Eye Clinic

value the ECLO role because it contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Eye Clinic, and patient experience.



(Vanessa pictured)

“The Information and Support Service is an invaluable part of the Eye Clinic. It proves the information and support needed for patients with visual loss to cope with everyday life and lead full and quality lives in the future. As doctors, we do not have the time and expertise to take on this role.” A consultant at the Eye Clinic.

Volunteer Visitors, helping people do the things they want to do

We celebrate the achievements of our 65 Volunteer Home visitors - every one of them is making a real difference to the life of the person they visit. People like David, who is in his 50's and lost his sight very suddenly this year.



"I am very grateful to Harriet for introducing me to Malcolm, my volunteer. His companionship and technical expertise has significantly improved the quality of my life. I can now access my favourite radio station and communicate by email [thanks also to Kadie at the centre for this].

I look forward to our visits to York's excellent real ale pubs." David

Before losing his sight, David worked with IT, and relied heavily on his computer. David says Malcolm is "a godsend" as together, they go out and about, as well as achieve things at home. Having the regular support of a volunteer with similar interests and a real understanding of the problems facing him, has helped David to come a long way in a remarkably short time. Malcolm has helped him regain access to the digital world and another important part of his life – enjoying a pint of real ale! David is a real ale enthusiast – and the pub provides a social life line too!

Chrissie supports 93 year old Joan, who lives in a care home. Joan was very sad when she first moved into the home, tending to stay in her own room. Chrissie

encouraged her to sit in the lounge and she now enjoys interacting with other residents, sometimes starting up a sing song. Joan likes to look her best and Chrissie helps her to choose cosmetics and keep her nails the way she likes them. Chrissie gets a lot out of the relationship too. She said, “I really enjoy my time with Joan, she is an inspiration, and always gives me a lovely smile. We laugh and sing and generally act like a couple of teenagers, chatting about makeup and boys and the good old days.”

Our volunteers are a real resource for the local community, as well as their client. Our volunteer Sharron works in a City pub where one of the regulars learned he is losing his sight. She encouraged him to make contact with YBPSS and put her training into practice, by providing a supportive and understanding listening ear.

- With regular weekly visits of 2-3 hours, 65 volunteers provide over 9,000 hours of support a year
- We trained 19 new volunteers as Home Visitors and 6 people as “My Guide” volunteers. My Guide is a partnership between YBPSS and Guide Dogs for the Blind to provide short term help for people to get confident finding their way to and from places they want to go
- We improved our training, which volunteers really enjoy, **“There was so much learning that I can benefit from, and use to support my client with the help of the excellent team at YBPSS.”**



With good guiding skills, our volunteers can always offer to assist someone in the community, who may need help to negotiate a difficult crossing or a busy street.

Activities, support groups and open days – offer something for everyone

Having a visual impairment need not stop anyone from having fun, and doing the things they want to do.

Providing a safe, supportive environment enables people to achieve things they would not be able to otherwise.

This year 124 people joined in with our activities, and peer support groups. The average age of group members is 79 and 62% of them live on their own. The groups really do help to avoid social isolation. This is what participants say:

“It’s another strand to your life, and gives you the chance to meet new people.”

“I’ve rediscovered knitting completely after 30 years of inactivity.”

“I’ve achieved something that I thought was impossible plus I have the companionship of another friendly YBPSS group.”



The Knit ‘n’ Natter group enjoyed selling their knitting and raising £686 for YBPSS. They also helped the community by knitting baby clothes for the Special Care Baby Unit and dog blankets for the RSPCA.

- Our unique **Audio Book Group** discusses not only the book, but narrators & listening equipment
- Trained volunteers ensure **Museums Group** members get maximum enjoyment from visits

- Our **Memories Group** is great for lively discussions on topics not thought about for many years! There were even 'hands on' sessions trying to identify concealed objects that were in use during their youths.
- Adapted cards and board games focus the minds of the **Games Group**
- **Weekly exercise** to music increases fitness, and the tutor ensures that everyone can follow the exercises by giving detailed verbal guidance. Volunteers help too. **“It keeps me active and gives me a purpose for doing things.”**

Monthly escorted country walks improve fitness and provide enjoyable social time too, always finishing with a cup of tea! This is the only group of its kind in York.



All of these activities were organised by Ann, through funding from the BIG lottery fund.

Hundreds of people came to many other events.

- A bi-monthly Macular Disease support group
- 2 Focus days, bringing hi tech companies to the centre to demonstrate electronic reading aids and computer equipment
- Direct Payments and Personal Budgets information day
- An ever popular Christmas lunch

Our Indoor Street Party celebrated the Queen's Jubilee with a red, white and blue theme. The atmosphere was amazing.



One to one computer skills and technology training, opens up new worlds

Sight loss can make it more difficult to benefit from the opportunities that new technology offers. However, the right adapted technology, hands-on experience, training and support can make what seems ‘the impossible’, possible.

- 31 people benefitted from one to one personally tailored computer tuition
- 380 people received demonstrations of new technology, leading to increased confidence and independence

“I am feeling more confident, I can use the computer and internet and now have access to information and services.”



David was an expert computer user, but after a sudden complete loss of sight, was unable to see his computer, search the internet, send emails, or listen to music, leaving him feeling very frustrated.

After training in the free NVDA screen reader he is now sending and reading emails independently, able to browse the Internet and is well on the way to being an expert.

Betty had never used a computer before but was keen to try anything that gave her back her ability to read. She is now using Guide, and to overcome the difficulties arthritis caused with typing, has mastered the ‘hands free’ version. She can now also scan and read her own letters giving her the privacy she was so keen to preserve.

Volunteers and supporters make it possible for us to celebrate in so many ways

Enthusiasm, expertise, money, time, goodwill, skills, compassion, and caring are just some of the qualities our volunteers and supporters bring to YBPSS.

Over 150 volunteers donated over 9,000 hours of time performing a huge range of activities, without which we could not manage.

Volunteers bring office skills:

Rachel, Andrew and Laura, our team of receptionists, ensure every visitor gets a warm welcome.



- Photocopying, and producing audio information
- Posting out 1,060 newsletters every 3 months
- Researching suitable trusts to apply to for funding

Volunteers ensure a full activity programme:

- Working with groups such as Knit 'n' natter, exercise class, walking and museums groups
- Helping people make best use of their residual vision, by teaching Eccentric Vision techniques
- Enlivening theatre performances with audio description at York Theatre Royal and the Grand Opera House

Volunteers provide peer support and personal experiences of sight loss to help others:

- By informing planners and policy makers locally and nationally
- By helping other visually impaired people to see a way forward

Fundraising is vital to our success, we appreciate everyone's efforts

60% of income raised, comes from individual people, trusts and supporters. Every single donation counts towards the £120,000 we need to raise each year.

Our donors and supporters are fabulous people; they make it possible for us to do everything we do.

£8,842 was collected at street and store collections and £1,646 in Pink Elephant boxes in shops and pubs.



- **£900** was raised at a St Crux Day
- **£13,269** was given in individual donations, including £100 from a 100th birthday party, £60 from a Diamond Wedding, £75 from a 50th birthday, £171 from Clifton Methodists Jubilee Party, £100 from York Residents Federation
- **£686** was donated by our Knit 'n' Natter group



Our Dragon Boat team did us proud raising **£2,300**, and, as one of The Rotary Club of York charities, we received a further donation from the day of **£6,000**.

Our first ever Fire Walk Challenge raised an enormous **£2,500** this year, with more donations coming in 2013.



Legacies are a way of making a gift to us, without it costing anything in the person's lifetime. We were delighted to receive £8,817 in legacies, which went towards running our Equipment and Information Centre.

We can't mention every donation here, but we can thank everyone who helped in whatever way. We really appreciate every gift, whatever the size, they are all very important to us.

Can you see your way to helping us? We need you!

As a local organisation, every gift of time, goods or money, support, encouragement and expertise, directly helps blind and partially sighted people In York.

There are many ways in which you could help, but the first step is to get in touch. We value all offers of help, so please contact Diane Roworth, Chief Officer, Harriet Bisson Volunteer Manager, or Rachel Atkinson, Community fundraiser. We will all be happy to take your call!

Donations from Trusts

We are extremely grateful to the many trusts that have supported our work this year, most of whom are listed below. We value their willingness to help blind and partially sighted people in York, and to make it possible for us to provide the services we do.

Sir George Martin Trust
Coutts
York Dispensary
Cottril Capital Trust
Helianthus Trust
Mollie Croysdale Trust
Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales
Charles and Elsie Sykes
British Wireless for the Blind
Charles Brotherton Trust
Lynn Foundation
Freemasons Grand Charity
Hull and East Riding Charitable Trust
Patricia and Donald Shepherd Charitable Trust
Sobell Foundation
York Common Good Trust
Dixie Rose Trust
Albert Hunt Trust
Brookfield Aviation
Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust

Our 5-year BIG Lottery Project ended this year, with a total of £128,815 being received over 5 years.

We received a grant of £9,800 from the Supporting Change Programme, which was used to evaluate our 5-year project and demonstrate its outstanding success.

Staff and Committee Members

The Executive Committee governs YBPSS; its members are Trustees of the Charity and they are elected at each Annual General Meeting. Every effort is made to ensure a majority of members are visually impaired. Members were

Mr. John Wilson	Chair
Mr. Richard Shaw	Vice Chair
Mrs Mary Fairbrother	Honorary Secretary
Ms Jean Weston	Honorary Treasurer

Other Committee members were:- Mr. B Shead, Mrs E Shead, Mrs A Smith, Mr. T Thompson, Mr. I Wood, Mr. K Cameron, Ms S Cairns, Mr. D Robson (resigned November 2012), Mr. M Melling, Ms D Walker Palmour.

Members of staff:- Diane Roworth, Chief Officer; Anna Harland, Services Manager; Harriet Bisson, Volunteer Manager; Deborah Wheller and Fiona Samuel, Equipment & Information Centre Officers; Ann Mattam, Activities Organiser; Vanessa Camp, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer; Barbara Fairs, Office Manager; Alison Backhouse, Accounts & Talking Book Service; Sarah Gowers and Rachel Atkinson, Community Fundraisers.

YBPSS Accounts for April 2012 to March 2013

These summary accounts are compiled from the full accounts, independently examined by Creers, Chartered Accountants, York. The full report can be obtained from the Honorary Treasurer or the Charity Commission.

The generous support of members, friends, Trusts, the Big Lottery fund, City of York Council, and North Yorkshire and York PCT ensured we provided real help to blind and partially sighted people in York.

Summary Accounts for the Year 2012/2013

<u>Income</u>	<u>2012/2013</u>	<u>2011/2012</u>
<u>City of York Council</u>	£	£
Volunteer Visiting Service	17,937	17,937
Equipment & Information Centre	19,920	19,920
Council Equipment Service	4,543	4,543
Talking Book Service	14,268	14,268
Stroke Project	2,000	-
Total	58,668	56,668
<u>North Yorkshire and York PCT</u>		
Equipment & Information Centre	15,162	15,646
Eye Clinic Service	15,702	20,808
Total	30,864	36,454
Total Service Agreements and Contracts	<u>89,532</u>	<u>93,122</u>
 <u>Other Grants</u>		
BIG Lottery Fund	9,164	17,128
Supporting Change Lottery Fund	9,800	-
Silver Dreams/OPTiC via RNIB	1,415	-
Lloyds TSB Foundation	15,000	15,000
York Hospital for Eye Clinic Service	9,450	-
Endowment Fund	-	1,070
<u>Other Income</u>		
Social Activities	2,262	2,101
Training, Services and Equipment Hire	365	719
E&I Centre Sales	18,891	15,466
Bank Interest, Income from Work, Sundries	5,516	6,430
Community Fundraising Income	21,350	23,289
Trusts, Donations, Gift Aid	50,076	27,162
Legacies	8,817	33,782
Access to Work	1,894	833
Total Other Grants and Other Income	<u>155,070</u>	<u>142,980</u>
Total Income	<u>243,532</u>	<u>236,102</u>
Endowment	-	1,070
Restricted	99,173	90,517
Unrestricted	144,359	144,515
	<u>243,532</u>	<u>236,102</u>

<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2012/2013</u>	<u>2011/2012</u>
	£	£
BIG Lottery Fund (see note1)	9,164	17,128
Salaries, NI & Pension	146,721	134,947
Staff Expenses (travel etc)	638	939
Volunteer Expenses (travel etc)	915	1250
Office Expenditure (see note 2)	45,447	44,310
Recruitment and Advertising	1,028	744
Social Activities	1,759	1,461
Newsletter and Publications	4,612	1,955
Fundraising and Publicity	2,811	884
Talking Books Membership Subscriptions	11,753	12,751
Equipment & Information Centre Purchases	16,539	15,811
Council Equipment Purchases	2,810	1,628
Consultancy (Supporting Changes Project)	5,599	-
Tutor Fees	2,468	-
Depreciation	-	-
Independent Examiner's Fee	1,840	1,780
Total Expenditure	<u>254,104</u>	<u>235,588</u>
Restricted	99,753	91,181
Unrestricted	<u>154,351</u>	<u>144,407</u>
	<u>254,104</u>	<u>235,588</u>
Surplus/deficit for the financial year	(10,572)	514
Restricted	(580)	406
Unrestricted	<u>(9,992)</u>	<u>108</u>
	<u>(10,572)</u>	<u>514</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2013

	<u>2013</u> £	<u>2013</u> £	<u>2012</u> £
Tangible Fixed Assets			-
Current Assets			
Stock	7,978		6,518
Cash at Bank & In Hand	95,615		111,073
Debtors	8,883		1,470
		112,476	119,061
Liabilities and Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and Accruals		7,137	3,150
		105,339	115,911
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		105,339	115,911
Represented by			
Endowment Fund		1,070	1,070
Restricted Funds (see note 3)		9,030	7,449
Designated Building Fund (see note 4)		51,290	51,290
Unrestricted Funds		43,949	56,102
		105,339	115,911

Notes to accounts

1) This covers part rent, salaries, tutor fees, computer equipment, volunteer expenses and transport.

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

3) 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 Talking Signs.

4) The Designated Building Fund is a fund created to specifically procure and sustain new premises.

The photographs on the front cover show

- Diane Roworth, Chief Officer receiving the Duke of York's Community Initiative Award
- The winner of the prize for the best outfit, at our Jubilee indoor street party
- A customer choosing equipment in our Equipment and Information Centre, see page 3
- David accompanied by his volunteer visitor Malcolm, see page 8

In some instances, we have changed the names of the individual people whose stories have been used in this report, but the content is entirely accurate.

Together we can help blind and partially sighted people get more out of life. Could you

- Volunteer your time or expertise
- Make a donation – a regular one would help even more
- Remember us in your will
- Support our work in any way you can

Contact us today and join more than 150 other people who volunteer to help.

Ring us on 01904 636269.

We guarantee you'll enjoy knowing you make a difference.

This report is produced in 16 point print as standard. Larger print, Braille and audio formats are available on request, and it is on our website. (www.ybpss.org).



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