



Annual Review 2022-2023

My Sight Nottinghamshire



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Who We Are

Our Vision

Independence, inclusion and empowerment for people with sight loss across Nottinghamshire.

Our Values

Trust

We use language that makes people feel valued and safe; we follow through actions; we manage expectations; we respect confidentiality; we are accountable and take ownership and responsibility.

Respectful

We are self-aware in how we behave; we actively listen; we are mindful of the impact of our actions; we ensure controlled and respectful responses.

Inclusive

We value people's differences and welcome everyone's contributions; we ensure our actions are inclusive; we challenge unfairness and inequality.

Empowering

We share skills, knowledge & experience; we are driven by the needs of those we support; we show praise and appreciation; we support you to be empowered; we are innovative and creative.

Empathetic

We deal appropriately with challenging behaviour; we understand the needs of others; we seek, reflect and learn from others; we have the courage to speak up.

Our Services

Practical Support

Sight loss advice including equipment, tech solutions, daily living skills, employment support and low vision advice

Emotional Support

Shared Vision, ECLO, My Guide befriending and counselling

Social Activities

Peer and social groups, sports and physical activities, arts and choir

For Professionals

Accessibility audits, training, transcriptions, Digital Accessibility Group, room hire

Michael Conroy, Chief Executive Officer

During 2022/23 we faced an exceptionally challenging financial period. I am proud to say that we remained steadfast in our commitment to supporting individuals with visual impairments. Despite this difficult period, our trustees, staff and volunteers' commitment has been inspiring, as we strive to continue making a difference to the lives of people with visual impairments.

Over the course of the year, we found ourselves in the unfortunate position of having to implement cost-cutting measures, including redundancies. These decisions were not taken lightly as we understand the direct impact they have on our staff and the community we serve. However, in order to sustain our operations and continue providing vital assistance to those with visual impairments, difficult choices had to be made.

The My Sight Notts team has demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, finding innovative ways to bridge the gaps caused by reduced resources. We continue to develop and improve our sight loss support services and thanks to the Thomas Pocklington Trust, we were able to launch their fully funded "Works for Me" employment support service.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on securing more multiyear grant funding and regular income from new sources, including the NHS and the private sector. We believe this increased financial support will enable us to not only sustain our existing programs, but also to expand our reach, ensuring more individuals with visual impairments receive the support they deserve.

I want to express my gratitude to our staff, volunteers, supporters, donors and partners who have stood by us during these challenging times, ensuring people with sight loss achieve independence, empowerment and inclusion.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.



Michael Conroy CEO

Practical Support

Practical support is at the heart of My Sight Notts' offer. Over the past year we have increased our focus on digital accessibility and tech solutions to support people's independence.

Much of the last year has been spent building on the digital and tech support we embedded as part of our offer throughout the pandemic, enabling people to stay connected and independent.

In 2022/2023 we have:

- Provided comprehensive tech sessions to almost 300 people on a variety of digital solutions including apps, smart technology, wearable technology, software and digital magnifiers
- Demonstrated smart home technology in our Smart Room, supporting people to implement smart lighting, heating, security and entertainment systems
- Enabled 'try before you buy' sessions in our Smart Room demonstrating a range of tech and equipment including talking TVs, microwaves, induction hobs and scales

Focus on Equipment

Accessible equipment plays a crucial role in supporting people with sight loss by providing them with tools that enhance independence, mobility, communication and access to information. In 2022/2023 720 people attended an appointment to look at our range of equipment. We also held two focus days with Optelec and VisionAid, both demonstrating a range of their products including digital magnifiers and wearable technology, giving people with sight loss the opportunity to engage directly with the supplier, try equipment out and ask questions before they commit to buying a piece of equipment.

Three quarters of people with sight loss that are able to work are unemployed. We want to change that.

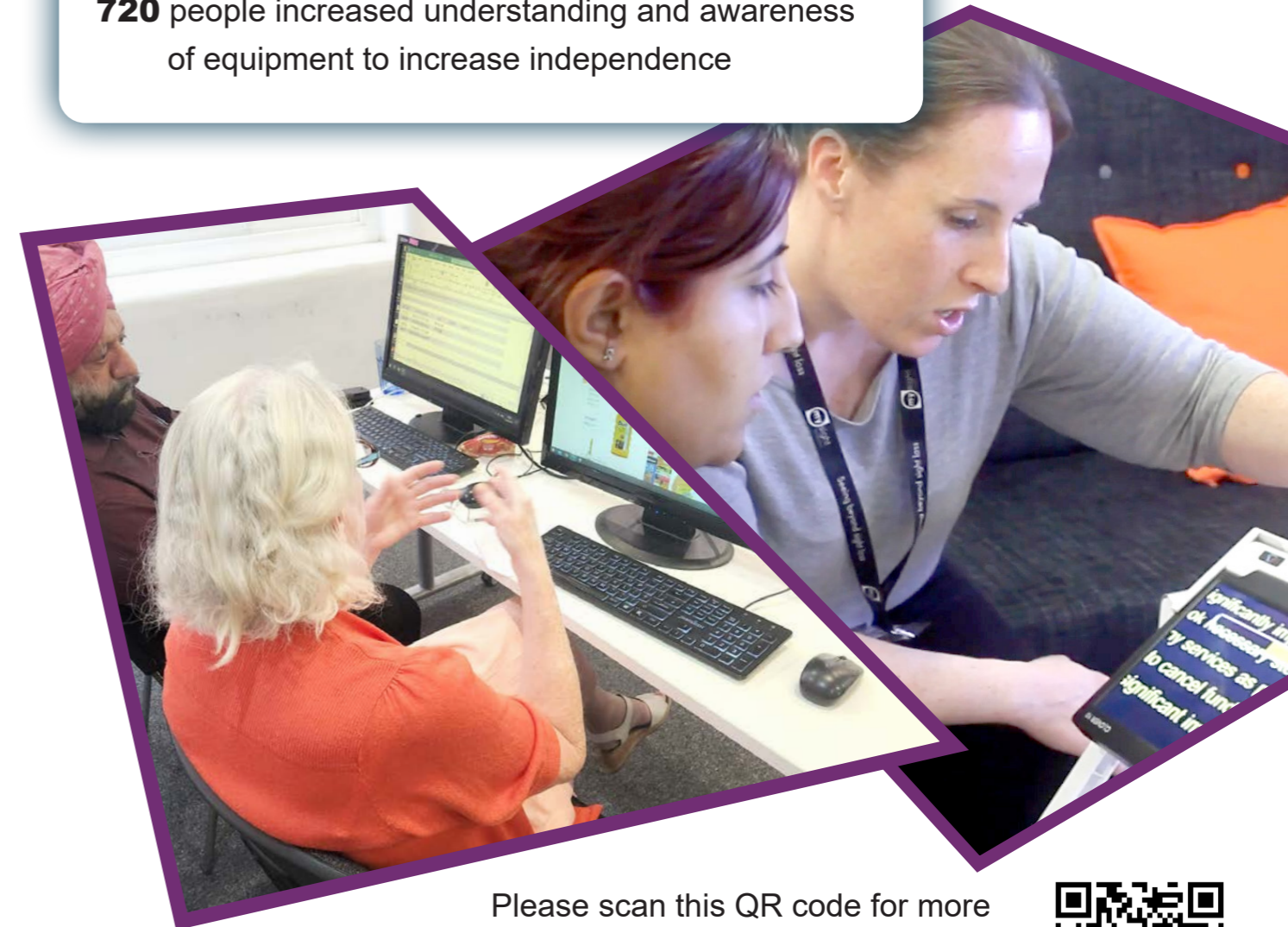
Works For Me employment programme

Works for Me is a brand-new project that started in March 2023. Funded by the Thomas Pocklington Trust, Works for Me will support people with sight loss to gain the skills and confidence to move nearer to, or into, work.

Practical Support Outcomes

300 people increased skills in tech

720 people increased understanding and awareness of equipment to increase independence



Please scan this QR code for more information on our practical services



Emotional Support

Emotional and peer support underpin everything we do. Supporting someone through the range of emotions that come with a diagnosis of sight loss is more important than ever.

- 1500 people supported at point of diagnosis
- Over 70 people supported in our Shared Vision service
- 22 befriending partnerships established

ECLO

Being diagnosed with sight loss can be devastating. Our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) is there to support individuals straight after a hospital appointment. ECLO plays a vital role in supporting patients with understanding eye conditions, emotional support, signposting and providing information and advocacy.

Shared Vision

Shared Vision is our emotional support service that focuses on facilitated peer support. A series of workshops enable people to share their sight loss experience, adapt to living with sight loss and understand that they are not alone. The sessions also offer practical daily living solutions to remain as independent as possible. Over the past year, this peer support has provided individuals with guidance, support and encouragement, helping individuals with sight loss to build confidence and overcome challenges.

Counselling

Jeremy Mercer, a Level 4 counselling student, joined us as a volunteer Counsellor in 2022 and has been supporting individuals with a range of coping strategies and talking therapies. This provision has added immense value to the work we already do. Jeremy supports people either face to face, via video call or telephone.

Befriending

Sight loss can often lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Our My Guide befriending service provides invaluable support, promoting social connection, independence, and well-being, contributing to a more inclusive and fulfilling life for people with sight loss. My Guides have offered companionship, some practical support, help to attend social activities and generally supported people to improve their wellbeing.

Emotional Support Outcomes

105 people increased their positive mental and emotional wellbeing

1500 people increased awareness of local support and how to adapt to living with sight loss



Please scan this QR code for more information on our emotional support services



Social Activities

We welcomed our choir back in April after a lengthy absence due to the pandemic, also welcoming the choir from Bradbury Fields, from Liverpool, in October, in continuation of our exchange programme. This, along with a fantastic Christmas concert, was hosted by the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Bramcote and their amazing volunteers.

In 2022/2023 we worked with partners to deliver a range of creative activities including:

- Collaboration with Nottingham Trent University
- Sessions with our Newark social group by artist Elaine Winter
- A new drumming project using everyday items to make rhythms

Our amazing Lead Volunteers for our social groups in Nottingham, Newark, Mansfield and Worksop ensure a full programme of activities. Due to overwhelming demand for our social group in Nottingham, we re-introduced our Tuesday coffee mornings in April 2022.

Our Nottingham Sheriffs Goalball team have had an excellent year with the novice team winning gold and bronze at two tournaments and the intermediate team finishing second in the league – congratulations to all involved!

Our Swim and Gym Sessions at Victoria Leisure Centre have enabled people to become familiar with the centre and gym equipment until they are ready to attend independently. In 2022/2023 we held 50 sessions.

Our two walking groups clocked up an impressive 350 miles (approximately) over the last year! Our excellent walk leaders took people all over, from local walks by the Trent to long rambles over the Derbyshire Peaks.

We continued our Boccia sessions and we were very pleased to be able to run four tandem rides with support from Ridewise and funding from Clearwater International, Redrow Community Fund, Mazars Community Trust and various other private donors.

Our fantastic Talking News volunteers have recorded local county news every two weeks, along with stories of interest and 'What's On' guides. In 2022/2023 they recorded 26 sessions.

Social Activity Outcomes

Over **150** opportunities for people to increase positive physical and mental health

250 people increased social connections



Please scan this QR code for more information on our social activities



Spotlight on...Legacies

Gift in Wills remain one of the most valuable sources of income for My Sight Notts with around a third of our services being funded this way. In 2022/2023 we received Legacies totalling £93,264. This year we have joined 'Bequeathed', an online free wills service that is available to any of our supporters, please visit www.bequeathed.org/mysightnotts for further details.

We have teamed up with local will writer and author Amanda Harris, who can offer a personal service to anyone who wants to write or update their will. This service is free of charge to anyone accessing our services. Please call 0115 9706806 or email info@mysightnotts.org.uk for more information.

Spotlight on...The Bigger Picture

Due to the severity of their sight loss, many people may feel that there is little to be gained by going to the theatre, a concert or sports match. Fortunately, tech solutions such as headsets allow people with sight loss an opportunity to attend by enabling them to zoom in and out and change contrast and colours. Thanks to VisionAid we have access to one of these headsets which prompted us to start the Bigger Picture project.

We work with various venues across the city and county and following a meeting with the Nottingham Playhouse we were invited along to a performance of Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing. We took Joan, who has macular degeneration. She was able to see characters and props at the back of the stage and was able to identify which actor was talking – which she would not have been able to do without this tech. Joan said "Wonderful! I wouldn't have missed this experience for the world!"



For Professionals

In 2022/2023 we formalised and widened our offer to support other charities, statutory agencies, private businesses and individuals to become more aware of the impacts of sight loss through training, digital accessibility and audits, adding to the already established transcriptions service.

Transcriptions

The service converts a wide variety of documents into Braille, large print and audio files, ensuring literature is accessible for people with sight loss.

Digital Accessibility Group

Our Digital Accessibility group is made up of staff, volunteers and members with different eye conditions, levels of sight and levels of tech knowledge. The group supports businesses to ensure that any websites, software or apps are accessible, using a variety of different magnification and speech over software.

Sight Loss Awareness Training

Our training covers a mixture of practical and classroom activities, looking at the emotional consequences of sight loss, barriers to independence, tech solutions and practical sighted guiding. We can deliver this training in house or on site at your premises.

“ *The training completely exceeded my expectations, full of information and lots of practical demonstrations. It has significantly increased my insight into what it's like to have reduced vision.*

Accessibility Audits

we work with businesses, venues and the NHS to ensure that they can be as accessible as possible for people with sight loss. This includes looking at reasonable adjustments to enable a member of staff to keep their job; advice on Access to Work assessments; carrying out full audits on buildings, websites and literature.

Please scan this QR code for more information on our services for professionals



Our People

We strive to put service users at the heart of what we do, so when we received feedback that our referral process was 'clunky', we realised we needed to restructure. Alongside this, the organisation was enduring a difficult financial period, a combination of which resulted in some roles being put at risk of redundancy. This included four Sight Loss Advisors, the Volunteer Coordinator and Arts Development Officer. Our Marketing and Communications Manager, Julie Scarle, offered to take voluntary redundancy and our Services Supervisor, Matt Harrison, left to pursue a career with Thomas Pocklington Trust.

The new structure allowed us to implement some new roles for services staff but ultimately we lost three employees from the team. As well as Matt and Julie, we lost Jeanne Roberts, our Arts Development Officer. Jeanne's legacy lives on in our choir and partnership with Nottingham Trent University School of Art and Design and we wish Jeanne, Julie and Matt all the best for the future.

In May 2022 we were funded by the Thomas Pocklington Trust to trial an internship programme. Kay Dear, one of our valuable volunteers, was recruited on a nine-month placement supporting our Sight Loss Advisors. Kay supported members with tech skills whilst learning real work skills herself. We also welcomed Abbie McPhilbin in March as our new Employment Advisor for the Works for Me employment service, again delivered in partnership with the Thomas Pocklington Trust.

Volunteers

Volunteers are invaluable to My Sight Notts, offering time, skills and empathy to help improve the lives of individuals. In 2022/2023 120 volunteers added significant value to the work we do.

Our excellent Lead Volunteers in our social, Walkie Talkie Wednesday and rambling groups deserve a special mention. They go above and beyond for their service users. We celebrated all of our valued volunteers throughout the year (usually involving cake!), including celebrating National Receptionists Day in May and Volunteers Week in June.

Funding Overview and Partners

Trusts and Grants – income £104,944 (£80,137 in 2021/222)

Despite the overall income picture, we have seen an uplift in grants from trusts and foundations. In particular we would like to thank:

Foreman Hardy Trust
Global Radio
The Jones 1986 Trust
Inman Trust
J N Derbyshire
The Charlies Littlewood Hill Trust

The Jessie Spencer Trust,
The National Lottery – Awards for All
The Thomas Pocklington Trust
Thomas Farr Charity
Thoresby Trust
Sir John Eastwood Foundation

Other donations and gifts – income £28,340

We would like to give special thanks to:

- President Len Jackson and his wife Di for a successful quiz and bridge event
- Park Vision Optician for hosting a fundraising raffle
- Hollinwell Golf Club, for nominating My Sight Notts for their Charity Golf Day
- Amanda Harris for donating the proceeds of a raffle held at her book launch
- Suzuki Children's Violin Group for 'busking' at Christmas
- Wollaton Rotary for their 'Steps 4 Santa' Christmas Fundraising appeal

Charity Shops – income £84,107 (increase of 10% on 2021/2022)

Our charity shops in Mapperley and the city centre continue to provide high visibility and we have a loyal customer base, competing with larger charities and commercial vintage shops.

Partners

A huge thanks to all the partners we have worked with this year, in particular: Nottingham Trent University, University of Nottingham, Goalball UK, Ridewise, MHR Ltd, VisionAid, Nottingham Playhouse, Confetti and Metronome and the Church of St Michael and All Angels.



Financial Review

It proved to be an exceptionally challenging year financially. The slow recovery of grant funding and public donations following the pandemic was compounded by a 62% drop in legacy income which had a significant impact on our already depleted reserves. Financial progress will be monitored closely by trustees over the coming year to ensure we continue as a going concern, strive to achieve a sustainable model and begin to build back our reserves.

Incoming Resources	2022/2023	2021/2022
Grant Applications	£104,944	£80,137
Donations and Gifts	£28,340	£25,194
Legacies	£93,264	£242,622
Charity Shops	£84,107	£76,281
Equipment Sales	£32,259	£27,192
Professional Services	£18,574	£440
Fundraising Events and Other	£15,318	£8,930
Bank Interest	£3,771	£2,952
Total Income	£380,577	£463,748
Expended Resources	2022/2023	2021/2022
Raising Funds	£155,094	£150,945
Charitable Activities	£496,539	£410,138
Total Expenditure	£651,633	£561,083
Surplus/Deficit	-£271,056	-£97,335
Total Funds	£261,842	£532,898
Unrestricted Funds		
(inc £25,000 as designated funds)	£196,016	£489,495
Restricted Funds	£65,826	£43,403

Jacky Fisher - Chair of Trustees' Report

The board of trustees has continued to work together to help steer and oversee the excellent work of My Sight Notts in what is proving to be a difficult financial period. There have been a few changes to the board, with Adam Youatt retiring after 9 invaluable years of service. Adam continues to provide pro bono legal advice to My Sight Notts where needed. Kay Dear also left the board to take on a 9-month internship with My Sight Notts. We are currently recruiting new trustees to replace those who have left. Each trustee contributes valuable views and advice to Michael and his team and ensure that My Sight Notts continues its exceptional support and fulfils its aims.

All trustees have been delighted with the focus and achievements of My Sight Notts' services over the last twelve months, particularly in light of a necessary redundancy process and financially constraining period. However, we are fully supportive of the restructure of the Services Department - ensuring we meet an individual's needs in a person-centred way should be at the heart of what we do.

I have confidence that My Sight Notts will continue to deliver and develop its excellent work throughout 2023/2024 supporting people with sight loss and wish all the team successful outcomes to their hard work.

Our Board



Jacky Fisher
Retired Independent
Living Fund Director



Lisa Jones
Volunteer with the sight
loss sector since 1995



Faye Dale
National Talent Lead
for Goalball UK



Shamaila Kauser
Framework Housing
Association



Kathryn Skill
Speciality
General Manager
Ophthalmology NUH



Linda Ellis
Fundraising
Consultant



Malcolm Evans
Retired Accountant



Gemma Stapleton
Financial Head
of Bid Support.
the Princes Trust

Get in Touch



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My Sight Nottinghamshire



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Professional Referral

Professional referral forms can be found here:

www.mysightnotts.org.uk/referring-to-my-sight-notts/

Self-referral or Referring on behalf of someone else

Self referral forms can be found here:

www.mysightnotts.org.uk/contact/

Please scan these QR codes for My Sight Notts referral forms



Professional referral form



Self referral form

All referral forms can be emailed to:

referrals@mysightnotts.org.uk