mysight notts
Seeing beyond sight loss

My Sight Notts

Annual Review and Impact Report



2025 - 2026

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Michael Conroy - CEO



This year has been one of both progress and resilience for My Sight Notts. At a time when many charities are experiencing growing financial pressures alongside increasing demand for support, we have remained committed to our mission of supporting people with sight loss across Nottinghamshire to live independently, stay connected and achieve their full potential.

Throughout the year, our dedicated staff and volunteers have continued to provide high-quality services that make a genuine difference to people's lives. Through peer support, practical advice, assistive technology training, emotional support, counselling and a range of social activities, we have supported hundreds of individuals to build confidence, maintain independence and reduce feelings of isolation. The positive feedback we receive demonstrates the real and lasting impact of this work.

I am pleased to report that, for the third consecutive year, the charity has avoided operating at a financial deficit. This reflects careful financial management, effective governance and the continued generosity of our funders, donors, volunteers and community partners.

The wider charity sector continues to face significant challenges, with many sight loss organisations struggling to remain sustainable. Some have even been forced to close, highlighting the importance of maintaining a resilient and adaptable organisation capable of meeting both current and future needs.

We are especially grateful to supporters who remember My Sight Notts in their wills. Legacy gifts play an essential role in strengthening our financial stability and enabling long-term planning. While challenges remain, we look ahead with confidence and remain committed to delivering life-changing support for people with sight loss across Nottinghamshire.

Supporting Your Independence



Our Sight Loss Advisors empower people to live confidently and independently. We provide tailored support to access the tools people need to manage daily life more effectively and stay connected with the world around them.

We support individuals with assistive technology, practical IT skills, specialist equipment and adaptive techniques to enhance independence. Through personalised support and guidance, we enable people to build confidence in using a range of tools and strategies that help them navigate everyday tasks safely and independently.



Our employment support enables people to build confidence, develop valuable workplace skills and access opportunities that support greater independence. We work with individuals to identify their strengths, develop practical skills and address barriers that may affect access to employment and training.

James O’Neill - Assistive Technology

‘The support I have received from My Sight Notts has been incredibly helpful. I no longer panic over tech and I am learning new things everyday’





Resource Centre - Freda Spencer

‘I have had so many things from My Sight Notts - a white walking stick, talking kitchen scales, eye shields. They help me keep independent. The staff are always so helpful and knowledgable!’

275 people received personalised sight loss advice

63 people accessed employment support

920 equipment appointments

62% increased their employability skills

69% increased tech skills

74% increased confidence

Emotional Support



Emotional support is a vital part of our service delivery. Our Eye Clinic Liaison Officers (ECLO) play an important role in supporting people at the point of diagnosis, offering reassurance, information and practical guidance during what can be an uncertain time. Working closely with patients and clinical teams, ECLOs help individuals understand their diagnosis, discuss the support and services available to them and provide advice on accessing practical assistance, benefits, rehabilitation and other local resources. Their role helps ensure people receive the information and support they need to make informed decisions and begin adapting to changes in their sight.

Our Shared Vision courses provide opportunities for individuals to connect with others with lived experience of sight loss, creating a supportive environment where people can share experiences, exchange practical advice and learn from one another. The service offers encouragement, information and guidance that can help people build confidence in managing everyday challenges, develop new coping strategies and reduce feelings of isolation by strengthening social connections.



Our counselling service provides a safe, supportive space for people to explore the emotional impact of sight loss with both qualified counsellors and student placements. Counselling supports people to develop coping strategies, improve emotional wellbeing, manage anxiety and build resilience.

ECLO - Nathalie Berry

‘The ECLO was my first lifeline. Consultants and nurses care deeply, but they’re so busy. The ECLO has the time and the expertise to help you make sense of it all.’





Shared Vision - Susan Shakesby

‘Before I came to Shared Vision, I didn’t go out. Now I go to coffee mornings and the Nottingham social group every week - it’s changed my life!’

Counselling - Steve Lawes

‘My Sight Notts have supported me with emotional wellbeing. My wonderful counsellor has helped me understand the emotions of losing my vision. Without this, I would not be as mentally sound as I feel now.’



45 people accessed Shared Vision

730 People seen by ECLO

36 people accessing counselling

83% increased confidence

72% increased independence

65% reduced isolation

Social Connections



Social connection plays an important role in wellbeing, confidence and reducing isolation. We offer a wide range of activities that bring people together in welcoming and supportive environments.

Our walking groups and swim and gym group support people to stay active, build friendships and enjoy shared experiences. Our talking newspaper helps people to stay informed and connected to the world around them. Whilst our choir, social groups and coffee morning provide opportunities to connect with others, have fun and feel part of a community that understands the challenges of sight loss.



By creating opportunities for friendship, participation and shared experiences, we help people with sight loss maintain meaningful social connections and lead fuller, more connected lives.

176

people accessed physical and creative activities

253

people accessed social activities

Zoe Walton - My Sight Newark Social Group

‘I thought my life was over, then I came here and realised it wasn’t. I’ve made lovely friends and discovered things I like doing. It’s just life changing.’





Brian Hardy - Walkie Talkie Wednesday

‘I started walking with the group in February this year. I enjoy the walks - it gives me a break from being at home. I really enjoy being out in the fresh air with other people.’

Erica Coles & Sian O’Neill - Choir

‘It’s social time, friends, exercise - I love it!’ - Erica

‘Singing gives me freedom from my troubles and it really helped me through grief after losing a family member’ - Sian







Teresa Clark - Rambling Group

‘A ramble is a boost for my mental health, open countryside, fresh air, good company and feeling safe doing something I can no longer do independently’

82%

reduced isolation

66%

increased wellbeing

For more information about our services, please scan the QR code:

Celebrating Our Volunteers

Volunteers play a vital role at My Sight Notts, supporting activities, leading groups, assisting with technology or simply offering a friendly face and listening ear. Volunteers help create welcoming and inclusive services that empower people with sight loss to live independently and stay connected to their communities. Many of our volunteers live with sight loss themselves.

Volunteers strengthen the reach and quality of our services, enabling more people to access support and activities while building a strong sense of community and shared purpose. The contribution made by our volunteers is invaluable in helping us deliver lasting impact and meaningful change.

126
volunteers

9645
volunteer hours





‘My Sight Notts helped me so much so I just wanted to give something back’ Neil, reception volunteer

Some of Our Amazing Volunteers



















For more information about volunteering, please scan the QR code:

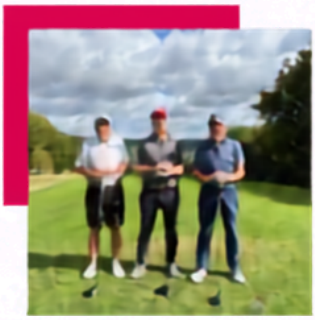
Fundraising Events

Following the recruitment of an events and community fundraiser early in 2025, there has been a marked increase in fundraising events delivered over the last year, providing more opportunities for people to get involved through attendance, volunteering or fundraising - helping us to build stronger relationships with existing supporters and attracting new audiences who may not have previously known of My Sight Notts.



Park Garden Trail - 22nd June 2025

We were delighted to be one of the chosen charities at the Park Garden Trail again in June 2025. We attended with an information stand and used the My Sight Notts vehicle to help people with mobility issues access the many beautiful gardens that were open to the public. We received a share of the proceeds from the day, totalling £4,040.



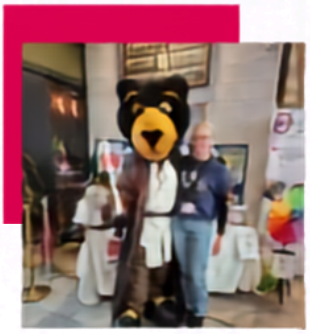
Charity Golf Day - 12th September 2025

We hosted our first Charity Golf Day at Springwater Golf Club, Calverton on a sunny day in September. Six teams competed for the Winner's Trophy, whilst enjoying breakfast, lunch and a presentation about My Sight Notts. The trophy was won by the team from FC Cartons and the event raised over £2,243.



Robin Hood Half Marathon - Sunday 28th September 2025

At the end of September, Mary Greer-Arnfield (photographed) and Jo Wardle, took part in the iconic Robin Hood Half Marathon in support of My Sight Notts. As well as beating personal records, they raised a fantastic £1,250!



Nottingham Panthers - October 2025

My Sight Notts were honoured to be Nottingham Panther's Charity of the Month in October. We attended ice hockey matches at Motorpoint Arena throughout October and raised awareness with spectators, as well as collecting donations and raffling off a signed Panther's jersey. We raised £600 during the month.

Abseil - Sunday 12th October 2025



On Sunday 12th October, 19 brave adventurers faced their fears and abseiled off Miller's Dale Viaduct in the Peak District to raise funds for My Sight Notts. This included two of our trustees, service users, staff and local businesses. The event raised a massive £9,563!

Charity Quiz - Friday 23rd January 2026



Our Charity President, Len Jackson, and his wife Di, hosted their annual Charity Quiz in January in Radcliffe-on-Trent. Sixteen teams took part in the evening, enjoying a ploughman's supper and raffle, as well as taking on the challenge of the quiz. The event raised a record-breaking £2,212!

Firewalk - Friday 13th February 2026



On a very cold and wet evening in February, 17 supporters faced their fears and walked across hot coals to support My Sight Notts. The event was kindly sponsored by Newmedica, who also took part and raised £4,038. Thanks to Nottingham Rugby Club for hosting us.

Choir Events 2025 - 2026



Our choir attended lots of events over the last year including a visit to Liverpool to sing with the Bradbury Fields choir - now an annual event! We also sang at the Playhouse as part of their Community Choir evening. At Christmas we sang at the Victoria Centre in Nottingham and raised £404.46 as a result! The choir also sang at St Marys Church in the Lace Market in Nottingham for Nottingham Light Night, where we also had a stall to raise awareness about sight loss.

For more information about events and fundraising, please scan the QR code:

Raising Awareness In the Community



Raising awareness about sight loss in the community is a powerful way of promoting understanding and empathy. By sharing real-life experiences and practical insights during talks, training and events, we help audiences better appreciate the everyday challenges faced by people living with sight loss.

Engaging with communities has encouraged meaningful discussion about how small, practical adjustments can make significant differences. As a result, many communities have become more confident in supporting people with sight loss and are more motivated to take positive action within their own communities.



In late 2025, we developed a Schools Pack to support schools and colleges in raising awareness and funds for My Sight Notts. As a pilot for this initiative, we delivered a session at SparkenHill Primary School in Worksop, where we helped approximately 100 pupils develop a greater understanding of sight loss.

Talks in 2025 - 2026 included:

Eastwood, Burton Joyce and Retford Macular Groups
Nottingham Light Night at St Mary's Church
Bingham Audio Magazine
Sparkenhill School
Inner Wheel Warsop
Bilborough College

Sight Loss Awareness

Our Sight Loss Awareness Training provides participants with a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by people living with sight loss. It explores barriers to independence, the emotional impact of sight loss, communication skills and some of the more common eye conditions and diseases, using our Eyes Reality simulation AR headsets. Participants also learn to support positive and inclusive interactions and build confidence in how to safely and appropriately guide someone with a visual impairment.

For corporate teams, sessions focus on workplace inclusion, accessibility, customer experience and creating environments that support colleagues and customers with sight loss.

Training for healthcare professionals places emphasis on patient experience, communication approaches and understanding the emotional and practical impact that sight loss can have on individuals and their families.



Our families and friend's sessions are designed to help those supporting a loved one with sight loss to gain a better understanding of the challenges they may experience, encouraging independence, dignity and inclusion in everyday life.

Sessions in 2025 - 2026 included:

Sight and Sound
Office of the Public Guardian Nottingham
Office of the Public Guardian Birmingham
Broadway Cinema
Newmedica
Familes and friends x 42 people

For more information on our talks and Sight Loss Awareness sessions, please scan the QR code:

Achievements



We have expanded our reach significantly through a series of brilliant fundraising events, helping to raise awareness of our work and strengthen our presence within the community. Despite the closure of our Mapperley charity shop, we have built momentum by exploring and developing new fundraising opportunities, establishing valuable partnerships and increasing engagement with corporate supporters.

To further raise awareness and generate sustainable income, we have developed a new School's Pack designed to support schools in understanding our work while providing practical opportunities for fundraising and engagement.

We have also strengthened our counselling provision by recruiting two new student counsellors to complete their placement hours with us. Their addition enhances our capacity to support more individuals while helping to develop the next generation of counselling professionals.

Investment in our specialist support services has remained a priority. We have supported an additional member of staff to qualify as an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO), increasing our expertise and strengthening the support available.



These achievements reflect the dedication, creativity and commitment of our staff, volunteers, partners and supporters, all of whom continue to make a meaningful difference to the people and communities we serve.

Challenges

Staff Changes within Key Roles

The departure of both the Peer Support Coordinator and the Admin and Activities Coordinator created significant gaps within the services team and delayed service delivery. Although we recruited two new excellent staff members as quickly as possible, the period between staff leaving and new appointments placed additional pressure on existing team members and affected the pace at which activities could be delivered.

Closure of the Mapperley Charity Shop

Despite the continued generosity of our supporters, rising operating costs combined with a sustained fall in retail sales made it no longer financially viable for us to continue running our charity shop in Mapperley. This decision also means a loss of our high street presence, reducing opportunities to raise awareness of our services and potentially limiting our reach to people who may otherwise have discovered and accessed support through the shop. This decision was not taken lightly and all options to keep the shop open were explored. However, the current economic climate left us with no sustainable alternative.

Reduction in Eye Clinic Liaison Provision

The reduction in our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) provision has created challenges for service delivery. We have benefited from employing a full-time ECLO, ensuring consistent support for patients requiring advice, emotional support, signposting and onward referrals following sight loss diagnoses. Due to health-related circumstances, our current ECLO has reduced their working hours to three days per week. While we have proactively trained an additional ECLO to help maintain the service, they are available for only one day each week. As a result, we continue to operate below full-time capacity, whilst demand for support is increasing.



What We Have Learned

Changes to staffing have highlighted the importance of workforce resilience and succession planning. Clear handover processes and cross-training across roles can help minimise disruption when staff leave or are unavailable. We have also recognised the importance of supporting existing staff during periods of increased workload and maintaining flexibility in how services are delivered. These experiences have reinforced the need to build resilience into our staffing structures rather than relying too heavily on individual roles or areas of expertise.

The closure of the Mapperley charity shop demonstrated that traditional income-generating models cannot always be relied upon in the current economic climate. However, it has also encouraged us to think more creatively about fundraising, community engagement and partnerships. The success of fundraising events, development of the School's Pack and increased engagement with corporate supporters demonstrate that there are opportunities to strengthen income while also raising awareness of our work.

Our Finance and Fundraising Committee continues to closely monitor income and expenditure, while the recruitment of an additional fundraiser helps us develop new opportunities and extend our reach across Nottinghamshire.

We have also learned the importance of investing in skills and capacity for the longer term. Recruiting more student counsellors and supporting an additional member of staff to qualify as an ECLO has increased our expertise and created opportunities to build future capacity. However, the overall reduction in ECLO hours has also demonstrated that developing staff skills does not always replace lost capacity, particularly when demand for services is increasing.



Looking Forward to 2026 -2027

The landscape for sight loss charities continues to evolve. The recent closure of Vista, the long-established sight loss charity serving neighbouring Leicestershire, is a reminder of the challenges facing the sector nationally. While this is understandably concerning for many people affected by sight loss, it also highlights the importance of strong, adaptable local organisations. My Sight Notts is committed to ensuring we remain resilient, responsive and ready to support increasing demand for our services in the year ahead.

Over the coming year, we will continue to make the best possible use of our resources. One key area of focus is how we manage large-scale mailouts. By embracing more digital communication where appropriate and reducing unnecessary printing, we aim to cut down on paper use, reduce costs and lessen our environmental impact, while still ensuring that everyone can access information in the format that works best for them.

We are also undertaking a full review of our volunteer programme. Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do and we want to ensure they feel valued, supported and empowered. This work will focus on improving recruitment, training and ongoing support, while creating more flexible and rewarding opportunities for people to get involved.

We are also beginning to explore a wider range of new activities and services designed to bring people together, strengthen community connections, improve wellbeing and help reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.



As we move forward, our focus remains clear: to ensure that we enable independence, inclusion and empowerment for people with sight loss across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.

Financial Review 2025 - 2026

Overview

The charity's financial position remained broadly stable in 2025/2026. Total income was £640,582, compared with £639,924 in 2024/2025, total expenditure was £640,479, compared with £634,961 in 2024/2025, resulting in a small surplus of £103, compared with £4,693 in the previous year.

Income

Grant income increased by 12% and remained the largest income source at approximately 53% of total income. Donations and gifts increased by 16%. Fundraising events increased significantly reflecting the recruitment of an Events and Communities Fundraiser, demonstrating the potential for fundraising activities to make a greater contribution to unrestricted income in the future.

Income Pressures

Legacy income fell by 21% reflecting the normal year-on-year fluctuation in this income stream. Charity shop income fell by 19%, confirming the decision to permanently close our shops. Equipment sales, professional services income and bank interest all decreased this year.

Expenditure

Expenditure on raising funds increased by 13.7% representing approximately 27% of total expenditure. This will be monitored to ensure income-generating activity remains proportionate and provides an appropriate return. Expenditure on charitable activities reduced by 3.2%, while continuing to account for approximately 73% of expenditure.

Funds

Total funds at year end were £307,658, compared with £307,556 last year. Unrestricted Funds decreased by £39,680 and Restricted Funds increased by £39,782. Although total funds remained stable, the reduction in unrestricted funds is significant because these funds provide flexibility to meet general operating costs. Restricted funds are committed to specific purposes and cannot necessarily be used for general expenditure.

Finances 2025 - 2026

Incoming Resources	2025 – 2026	2024 - 2025
Grant Applications	£342,504	£305,185
Donations and Gifts	£38,283	£32,794
Legacies	£135,979	£172,854
Charity Shops	£65,383	£81,210
Equipment Sales	£17,838	£18,958
Professional Services	£12,814	£16,711
Fundraising Events	£26,042	£6,674
Bank Interest	£1,739	£5,538
TOTAL INCOME	**£640,582**	**£639,524**

Expended resources	2025 – 2026	2024 - 2025
Raising Funds	£174,260	£153,322
Charitable Activities	£466,219	£481,639
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**£640,479**	**£634,961**
Surplus/Deficit	**£103**	**£4,693**
Total Funds	**£307,658**	**£307,556**
Unrestricted Funds	**£144,533**	**£184,213**
Restricted Funds	**£163,125**	**£123,343**

Financial Outlook

The charity enters the next financial year with broadly stable total funds, diversifying income and developing sustainable sources of unrestricted funding remain priorities. Expenditure and cash flow will continue to be closely monitored. Trustees will pay particular attention to unrestricted reserves and the charity's ability to meet ongoing commitments.

Thank you

to all our supporters and funders for your amazing generosity over the last year

Trusts and Foundations

Henry Smith Charity
Fight for Sight
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Skerritt Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
Forman Hardy Charitable Trust
Sir John Eastwood Foundation
JN Derbyshire Trust
Jessie Spencer Trust
Charles Littlewood Hill Trust
Jones 1986 Charitable Trust
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Thomas Pocklington Trust

Corporate Supporters

MHR Global
Archimedia Accounts
Nottingham Panthers
The New Fat
TK Maxx
Newmedica Nottingham



Other Supporters and Partners

Carlton Rotary Club
Rotary Club Retford
Len & Di Jackson
Park Garden Trail
George Harrison
Newark & Sherwood Council
Newark Palace WI
The Crossing Church
John Lewis Volunteers
Lesley Cree Opticians
Broadway Cinema
Carlton Tesco
Hyson Green Asda
Jeanne Roberts
Kathleen Thompson
Mary Greer-Arnfield
Jo Wardle
Boots
Liz Wyatt

Thank you to everyone who donated to our ECLO appeal!

Thank you to everyone that has donated to My Sight Notts in 2025 - 2026

my sight notts

Seeing beyond sight loss

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