



Annual Report 2016 – 2017



Fundraising collection at Uttoxeter Race Course – bringing in much needed funds.

Chair and Chief Executive's Report

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2016-17. For several years, this introduction has started with a reflection on the economic challenges the sector is facing. As this is still very much the case, it starts to feel that this is 'the new normal' and we continue to change and adapt.

We are pleased to have had a successful year delivering our contracted services to Derbyshire County Council and to the Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Groups. The new County Contract has helped us to deliver services to more visually impaired people in the county, providing much needed information and support.

Given the extensive research done by national organisations, it comes as no surprise that we are seeing an increase in the numbers of visually impaired people registered as 'Sight Impaired' or 'Severely Sight Impaired'. With less money available from both charitable fundraising and from statutory contracts, our challenge at Sight Support Derbyshire is to meet the needs of the growing number of visually impaired people in Derbyshire. We continue to look for improved resources and better and smarter ways of working.

This report gives a flavour of our work over the year. We hope you enjoy reading about the achievements.



Claire Winfield
Chief Executive Officer



Martin Wilson
Chair of Trustees

Key Achievements 2016-17

Despite some news headlines of an improving economy, 2016/17 has continued to bring financial challenges across the charity sector, impacting particularly on smaller, local charities. This pattern continues in the statutory sector with Local Authorities and the NHS facing unprecedented (real term) cuts to their funding. As SSD receives funding from both of these statutory partners, we have felt the repercussions of funding reductions or freezes.

Despite the ongoing challenges, SSD has continued to provide much needed services across Derbyshire. We have had a number of achievements over the year, too many to mention individually and all of which are down to the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers, members and supporters. Highlights include:

- Following the head office move to Litchurch Plaza in the previous year, the new premises has proved a positive move for staff and for many of our service users. Staff find the layout more conducive to team working and improved communication; service users find access to the building and drop-off parking much easier. In November 2016 our landlord changed from R.G. Foster Textiles Machinery Ltd, Managing Agents for the FTM Pension Fund to Staton Young and we continue to build this relationship.
- Contracts and funding from our statutory partners has been (and continues to be) extremely difficult to predict. Local Authorities and the Clinical Commissioning Groups are all facing increasing financial pressures and this is reflected in their ability to provide any mid to longer term commitment to their future service requirements and available funding. We have continued to work with these funders to clearly identify the need for our services and what they achieve. On all of our contracts and grants we have reported that we have clearly met, or in many cases exceeded targets set. This has resulted in the contract with Derbyshire County Council being extended for another

year (year two, of a possible three years) and our contract with the Clinical Commissioning Groups being extended for a further year.

- A number of staff changes took place during the year. This included the recruitment of a new Fundraising Manager to the organisation and to the senior management team. We also recruited a number of new staff to work on the Derbyshire County Council contract. With the new contract and changes to service delivery, rather than very specific job roles, we moved to a more generic post of Rehabilitation Support Worker. This new role allows for a more flexible approach to work, reducing administration and travel for staff and allowing us to provide a more streamlined service to our customers.
- At the AGM 2016 our long standing President Richard Perkins resigned from office and during the year another trustee, Judy Taylor passed away. Both had made a valuable contribution to SSD and will be sadly missed. We did, however, recruit a new trustee to the charity who brings recent knowledge and experience from commissioning of services as well as other related areas.
- October 2016 saw us deliver our third year report to The Big Lottery for the North East Derbyshire project. Once again the results were extremely positive, demonstrating the success of our interventions in the area. As part of the project we were funded to commission an external evaluation of the project, this took place in Feb/March 2017 and included individual and group interviews with project participants, volunteers and staff as well as a desktop review of service data. The review was overwhelmingly positive and will be used as evidence of the projects success when we look for future project funding during year four.

- During the year we were able to report back to Children in Need about the great success of our re-launched Children's and Young People's services. We also decided to bid again for a further year's funding and found out at the end of March 2017 that we had once again been successful. The numbers of children and families accessing the service continues to increase and feedback about the range of activities available has been very positive. Due to the timings of the bidding rounds for the Children in Need money there was a gap in service funding. However, fundraising by Netherthorpe School which was restricted for Children's services was drawn down to cover the shortfall.
- Following previous unsuccessful attempts at working with free offers for electronic data management, over the year we have put a great deal of work into developing an in-house electronic recording system for information and reporting. As a small organisation this is time consuming and relies on buying in the skills and expertise to develop systems. Over the year we have worked with our I.T. provider to use SharePoint to collect information for our contracted direct service delivery. The system has been piloted and shown good results and went live on 1st April 2017. (The system will be closely monitored to ensure it meets our needs.)

Our Services During the Year

Hospital Service

Our fully trained staff and volunteers are located in all Derbyshire hospitals where registration of sight loss takes place. This service has proven invaluable over the years, in providing information, support and reassurance to those who have been medically advised of deteriorating or irreversible sight loss. In 2016-17 they supported 1,723 patients with individual support sessions. A further 5,062 were given general eye health information in clinics and at hospital events and information stands. Our hospital staff and volunteers remain the first port of call for many of our members.

Rehabilitation Service

With the new County Council contract bringing together rehabilitation, information and support, we have been able to offer a more flexible approach to how we deliver services. This has undoubtedly resulted in an improved and better joined up service provision.

Working across the county our qualified Rehabilitation Officers assist people with sight loss to learn augmentative skills to maintain their independence and live the lifestyle of their choice by providing training and support in the key areas of:

- Indoor/outdoor mobility training, including the use of canes and other mobility techniques.
- Skills for daily living, including personal care, food preparation and other essential economic tasks.
- Communication skills, including tactile, writing and other forms of communication.

During 2016/17, 140 people received 610 rehabilitation sessions.

Our lower level rehabilitation services (previously called 'Home Support') provided support to 318 people in their own homes. This includes help with domestic appliances, such as setting or calibrating central heating timers, clocks and other technical devices.

Low Vision Aid Scheme

During 2016/17 the LVA service has continued to supply equipment such as magnifiers, lamps and shaded spectacles to enable visually impaired people to maximise the use of residual vision. The service is free of charge to users and SSD works alongside optometrists to assess clients in their own homes and to supply equipment. The service continues to be funded by the Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Visually Impaired People's (VIP) Information Days

With the change to the County Council contract we now deliver all of the information days as a 'drop-in' style event. This has seen an increase in the number of people we are able to help. In 2016/17 we saw 420 at these events, targeting all newly registered people by letter and telephone, to invite them to their nearest event.

The aim of each drop-in session is to introduce visually impaired people to the range of support and assistance available to them, from agencies including County Council Adult Services, Derbyshire Constabulary, the library service, Derbyshire Fire Services, specialist information and technology providers and charitable organisations who advise on hearing loss, welfare rights and other matters.

Sports & Leisure Services

Blind and visually impaired people came together in increasing numbers to join in a range of sporting, leisure and social activities arranged by SSD. Some of these activities are run under the Big Lottery funded project in North East Derbyshire, others in Derby and surrounding areas are funded from various grants. Increasingly grant givers are looking to limit their awards as more groups bid for money. They also regularly look for new and innovative projects to fund on a short term basis.

Befriending Services

Sight Support Derbyshire recognises and understands how the onset of sight loss or deterioration of remaining vision can lead to increasing isolation, as individuals lack the confidence or ability to leave their own homes unaided.

Sight Support Derbyshire's Befriending service offers both telephone befriending or home befriending services to those who find themselves in this situation.

Derby City Council no longer fund any befriending work and we have had to stop our work in the City. We worked hard to ensure that all placed matches were consulted with. Most opted to stay in contact as a 'private arrangement' and two who did

not were referred on to other services. Our work in the county continued, funded by a joint grant from the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Mobile Resource Centre

The new Mobile Resource Centre/Pop-Up continues to be a success, allowing us to visit a wider range of venues and see more people than the old walk-on vehicle did. We have set up in a range of community venues, including libraries, garden centres, shops etc. Over the year we saw 1,218 people.

Children and Young People's Services

Sight Support Derbyshire continues to provide quality services for children and young people with a visual impairment. During 2016/17 we have maintained our regular meetings and ran successful school holiday activities for children and young people from around the county. We also saw an increased take up of our funded 1:1 swimming tuition.

North East Derbyshire Project

December 2016 saw us deliver our third year report to The Big Lottery for the North East Derbyshire project. Once again the results were extremely positive, demonstrating the success of our interventions in the area. As part of the project we were funded to commission an external evaluation of the project, this took place in Feb/March 2017 and included individual and group interviews with project participants, volunteers and staff as well as a desktop review of service data. The review was overwhelmingly positive and will be used as evidence of the projects success when we look for future project funding during year four.

Resource Centres and Call Helpline

In 2016/17 our Derby and Chesterfield Resource Centres and Derby, Chesterfield and Bolsover telephone helplines have continued to see a strong demand for services. Following a significant increase in the number of people using the helpline in recent years, more staff are now trained to deal with enquiries.

Over the year we saw, spoke to and helped 3,982 visually impaired people (2,877 people in Derby and 1,109 in Chesterfield and Bolsover).

Volunteers

Our volunteers at Sight Support Derbyshire lie at the heart of our service delivery efforts. It is because of their selfless and dedicated service we are able to reach out to blind and visually impaired people throughout Derbyshire. In 2016/17 we retained 128 volunteers, recruiting 19 in the process. This is a significant drop in volunteers; many leavers are accounted for in the loss of the Derby City Befriending service and the others as part of our natural turnover throughout the year and as part of the annual volunteer review process.

Recruiting and retaining volunteers has become increasingly difficult over the past few years. We are seeing demand for volunteer's increase, particularly amongst the statutory services. Hospitals, Community Fire services, City and County Councils now regularly advertise for volunteers. There is a national picture of increasing demand for volunteers and we continue to try new and innovative ways to recruit.

We do manage to retain many of our volunteers and celebrate their achievements at our annual volunteers' thank you events.

Plans for 2017-18

Despite the financial pressures being felt by all charities we remain strong and determined to continue to provide quality services to the thousands of blind and visually impaired people who depend upon us. To that end, in the coming year we will be focusing on the following:

- Taking steps to ensure the continuation of all existing services including seeking funding for those services whose funding is due to end.

- Improving and increasing our links with statutory and community organisations, aiming to ensure that the needs of visually impaired people in Derbyshire are catered for.
- Maintaining strong links with the local Clinical Commissioning Groups and working with them to deliver strong and responsive services. Keeping abreast of changes to Health Service structures and commissioning procedures e.g. Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP's).
- Maintaining (and where possible increasing) the numbers of visually impaired people we support across the City and County.
- Maintaining and developing closer working partnerships with other charities supporting visually impaired people in order to create new opportunities across the County. Particularly looking at opportunities for working with Visionary (an umbrella organisation for local sight loss charities that we are already a member of) as they forge new links with national charities.
- Linking with other visual impairment charities across the region (and where relevant country) to look at new innovation and best practice to inform our future work.
- Updating policies and procedures to ensure they reflect legislation, best practice and our working arrangements.
- Developing SharePoint as our in-house electronic recording system for our operational work and looking at similar systems to assist our fundraising work.
- Working with the Board to increase Board membership based on a skills analysis.

Finances 2016/17

2016/17 again saw us achieve a surplus which took the charities total unrestricted reserves up to £350,000. This is in line with Sight Support Derbyshire's Reserves policy, which was reviewed by Trustees in September 2016. The policy sets minimum reserves at a target of £250,000 and maximum levels at £350,000. The reserves at year end are at the upper limit.

Reviewing the year-end accounts, Trustees decided to set up a designated fund in order to be able to build up money for the purchase of an office property in the future. Owning our own premises will help us to become more economically sustainable in the future.

Along with all other charities in the current economic climate, fundraising continues to be a challenge. Our fundraising team (staff and volunteers) have worked hard over the year to ensure that our charity profile remains high.

Finances 2016/2017

SIGHT SUPPORT DERBYSHIRE FINANCES 2016/2017	
Expenditure	£
All Resource Centres	33,793
Hospital Service	34,658
Home Visiting Service	16,021
North East Derbyshire Project	80,613
Youth Support	14,350
Sporting Social & Leisure	17,887
County Services	180,748
Low Vision Service	92,974
Purchase of Aids & Equipment	3,751
Support Costs	137,889
Total Cost of Services	612,684
Generating Funds & Publicity	65,480
Governance & Administration	11,840
Trading Company	319
Total Expenditure	690,323

2016/2017	
Income	£
Donations	38,125
Legacies	116,232
Fundraising Activities & Events	27,845
Grants – inc Joint Finance	270,166
Statutory Contracts	314,830
Sale of Aids & Equipment	6,701
Sporting & Social Contributions	9,098
Interest on Investments	1,295
Other Income	25
Trading Company	1,421
Total Income	785,738
Surplus for year	95,415

Resources	
General Funds - May be used for any authorised activity	350,000
Designated Funds - Fixed Asset Fund	20,983
Premises Fund	60,300
Restricted Funds - Must be spent in accordance with Donor's wishes	15,235
Total Funds	446,518
Represented by	
Tangible Assets	20,983
Investments	5,000
Net Current Assets - Stock, Debtors, Cash & Deposits less Creditors	420,535
Total Net Assets	446,518

Acknowledgements for 2016/17

Our acknowledgements and thanks go to all the groups and individuals who have supported us with funding, services and time over the year. Without this support we would not be able to provide all the services we do. Listed are some (though by no means all) of the key groups and people we pay thanks to:

BBC Children in Need (2015-1881/ME)
Big Lottery Fund – N.E. Derbyshire (0010100893)
Central England Co-Operative Community Dividend Scheme
Chesterfield Royal Hospital Charitable Trust
Derbyshire County Council
Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
Foundation Derbyshire
Open Gate
Postcode Community Trust (PCT153474)
Provisional Grand Charity of the Province of Derbyshire
Royal Derby Hospital
South Derbyshire CVS
The Boshier Hinton Foundation
The C M Lowe Charitable Trust
The Mrs Yvonne Flux Charitable Trust
The Lynn Foundation
The N.Smith Charitable Settlement
The Pat Newman Memorial Trust
The Primary Club
The Red Socks Charitable Trust
The Russell & Mary Foreman 1980 Charitable Trust
The Sobell Foundation
The Tom Lethaby Memorial Trust
Toyota Manufacturing UK Charitable Trust

We are also extremely grateful to those people who left us a legacy in their Will this year and to those who donated in memory of a loved one. Many of these gifts are left by people who have benefited directly from our services and would like other visually impaired people to be able to do the same.

During the year we added to our book of remembrance which was set up for families and friends to record memories of loved ones who had left a gift to the charity.

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