



Annual Report 2018 – 2019



**Category winners at the 2018 Sight Support Derbyshire
Ey Up Mi Duck Race**

Chair and Chief Executive's Report

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2018-19. It has been another busy year for our charity, ensuring that our services reach out to visually impaired people and that we promote the benefits of good eye health to all.

In order to ensure that we can take advantage of future funding and contract opportunities, at the Annual General Meeting in November 2018, Trustees took the decision to change our Memorandum and Articles of Association (the rules governing our charity). The key changes were to broaden potential charity beneficiaries and to reduce the minimum number of trustees we need from eight, to four. As a charity, we remain committed to improving the lives of visually impaired people in Derbyshire.

As a fund raising charity, we rely on the generosity of the public and of grant making trusts and organisations for around two thirds of our income. Without this money, we would have to reduce the amount of work that we do. Nationally and internationally, there has been a great deal of bad publicity about fundraising charities. As a local charity, we have worked hard to try to overcome this bad publicity and reassure all of our donors that every pound given is put to good use, providing much needed services.

Over the last year our small fundraising team have been working with a new data management system, which allows us to maintain our records in line with General Data Protection Regulations and tailor our fundraising appeals. We are also members of the Fundraising Regulator and abide by their code of best practice.

Despite a challenging financial climate, we have delivered our services to over 4,000 visually impaired people during the year. We could not do this without the dedicated support from our staff and volunteers. It is their enthusiasm and commitment that ensures we are able to continue in our work, providing high quality services around the county.

As part of our feedback to our key funders, we collect a range of information about our services. This includes how many people we have helped, what we have done and what people using services think about the help they receive. It is always rewarding when feedback is positive and clearly demonstrates how people have benefited from what we do:

“I can’t believe how much you’ve been able to help. I had all but stopped going out, unless my daughter could take me, and I’d not done any baking for months. The help from Sight Support Derbyshire staff has meant that I can now go out to the local shops on my own. I have also got some talking kitchen scales and new lighting so I’ve started cooking again. It really is a new lease of life!”

Mrs M – two months after accessing our rehabilitation service.

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



Claire Winfield
Chief Executive Officer



Martin Wilson
Chair of Trustees

Key Achievements 2018-19

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

- We have continued to work with our funders to clearly identify the need for our services and what they achieve in terms of positive outcomes for visually impaired people. Once again, on all of our contracts and grants we have reported that we have clearly met, or in many cases exceeded, targets set.
- Our continued success on our main contract with Derbyshire County Council put us in a strong position to tender again for the service during the year. In January we were delighted to find out that we had once again won the contract for a further two years, with an option to renew for a third year.
- During the year we had a stable staff team, with very little turnover. Staff have benefitted from a number of training and development opportunities, including four staff attending the national Visionary Conference in Birmingham. Seven of our service delivery staff completed a three-week course, preparing them to carry out low vision assessments for visually impaired people. We have more people who can now carry out assessments, resulting in a more flexible approach.
- October 2018 saw us deliver our fifth and final report to The Big Lottery for the North East Derbyshire project. The end of project report was extremely positive, demonstrating the success of our interventions in the area and the project overall. We know that the success of twelve continued years of Lottery money has provided us with the opportunity and experience of developing and

delivering strong social support to people and we will build on this as we continue to look for further funding options.

- Our 'Living Well' project ran throughout the year and continued to provide an essential service to those who need some additional support in order to make the most of opportunities available to them. People accessing the service can have up to six sessions of support to help them improve their health and wellbeing. The service is highly valued by those who use it, and those who refer into it, and we received a number of 'thank-yous' and compliments over the year.
- During the year, we were able to report back to Children in Need about the great success of our Children and Young People's service. We completed the year one report and were able to demonstrate that we had met all of the outcomes. As we now have a three-year funding agreement in place, we were able to move into our second year. The Children and Young People's service continues to expand and develop, and evaluation has resulted in very positive feedback from the young people involved and from parents and families.
- Over the year we were able to update some of our IT hardware and software, and update our policies and procedures in this area, in order to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) from May 2018. Key staff were involved in attending courses and seminars in order to prepare for the implementation and we worked with other organisations in the sector to share information and resources. This is an area of work that is very new and we will continue to monitor and update our work as new information and best practice is published.
- 2018/19 has continued to bring financial challenges across the charity sector; financial cuts to local authority budgets also impacts on our work. Despite these ongoing, substantial challenges, SSD has continued to exist and

provide much needed services across Derbyshire. At a time when many smaller local charities are facing closure, this in itself is an achievement.

- At the AGM 2018, Trustees voted to amend the charity's Memorandum & Articles of Association. The key changes were to allow for the option of broadening our current working area outside of Derbyshire and also the scope of who we can work with to include vulnerable people other than those with sight loss. The Trustees have no current plans to change our area of work, but recognised that by making the changes, the charity is better placed to respond quickly to any future opportunities should they arise. (Relevant approval from the Charity Commission was sought and changes lodged with Companies House.)

Our Services During the Year

Hospital Service

During the year, one member of staff left the organisation and we recruited a new Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO). Our ECLO's are based at Royal Derby Hospital and Chesterfield Royal Hospital and supported by a small team of trained volunteers.

The service to hospital patients at the point of diagnosis has proved invaluable over the years. Our hospital staff and volunteers remain the first port of call for many of our members and we regularly get positive feedback about their work:

“After being told that I was losing my sight and that nothing could be done I was distraught. I honestly didn't know where to turn or what I was going to do. It was [the ECLO] who spent time talking to me and putting me in touch with other services that really helped.”

Eye Clinic Patient, May 2018

Rehabilitation Service

Under contract from Derbyshire County Council, our qualified Rehabilitation Officers, and Rehabilitation Support Workers, assist people with sight loss to maintain their independence and live the lifestyle of their choice.

During 2018/19, our Rehabilitation Officers worked with 131 people, who received 573 sessions of rehabilitation. These sessions focused on key areas of mobility, independent living skills and communication.

Our Rehabilitation Support Workers provided support to 347 people in their own homes. This work included issuing equipment such as talking clocks and liquid level indicators, help with domestic appliances such as setting or calibrating central heating timers, and signposting to services such as Talking Newspapers.

Low Vision Aid Scheme

During 2018/19 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.

Visually Impaired People's (VIP) Information Days

These events have continued to improve and develop, with staff using feedback from service users to inform who we invite to give information on these days. In 2018/19 we saw 378 people 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 Service, specialist information and technology

providers, and charitable organisations who advise on hearing loss, welfare rights and other matters.

Sports & Leisure Services

During 2018/19, despite the Big Lottery funded project in North East Derbyshire ending mid-year, SSD were able to continue to run a range of events and activities for blind and visually impaired people. Using a number of smaller grants and our own fundraised income, we have provided events including theatre trips, swimming, bowling, musical entertainment, craft activities and walks. These activities encourage visually impaired people to get 'out and about' and to continue to enjoy a social life. They also provide an opportunity for people to gain peer support, which can be very useful for people newly registered with sight loss:

"It's lovely to come out and meet new people. Talking to other people who can't see has helped me realise that life's not over!"
Participant at social group September 2018

Mobile Resource Centre

The Mobile Resource Centre/Pop-Up (MRC) continues to be a success, allowing us to visit a wider range of venues. We have set up in shops, libraries, garden centres, health centres etc. Over the year over 700 people received advice and support from our staff and trained volunteers.

Children and Young People's Services

Sight Support Derbyshire continues to provide quality services for children and young people with a visual impairment. During 2018/19 we have maintained our regular meetings and have run successful school holiday activities for children and young people from around the county.

The project has worked with 47 children and their families. A survey during the year showed overwhelming support for the service provided:

“J told me that he talks to children at school about the experiences he has had [at the SSD youth group], climbing, bowling, baking etc. He is able to join in with their conversations which helps him feel that he is not different”

Parent to a group member, April 2018

Resource Centres and Call Helpline

In 2018/19, our Derby and Chesterfield Resource Centres and telephone helplines continued to see a strong demand for services.

Over the year we saw, spoke to and helped 3,222 people (2,724 people in Derby and 498 in Chesterfield).

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 2018/19 we retained 88 volunteers, recruiting 17 in the process. These volunteers work across all areas of the charity, in fundraising, social groups, offices and services.

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

Plans for 2019-20

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:

- 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 Group 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 of which we are already a member) 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.
- Reviewing SharePoint as our in-house electronic recording system for our operational work and developing the use of E Tapestry in our fundraising work.
- Working with the Board to increase Board membership based on a skills analysis.
- Working to secure funding for the purchase of a new head office for the charity and putting plans in place for a property search and move.

Finances 2018/19

2018/19 again saw us achieve a surplus, mainly generated from generous legacies during the year. With the charity's Reserves Policy, setting minimum reserves at a target of £250,000 and maximum levels at £350,000, in line with a previous decision, Trustees decided to put the remainder of the surplus into the designated fund for the purchase of a property. This would allow the charity to save on rental costs and, moving forward, help to secure the charity's long-term future.

Trustees reviewed the decision on purchasing a 'head office' property for SSD. They once again agreed that this continued to be the aim. The addition of money to the designated fund moves us closer to achieving that ambition.

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 2018/2019

| SIGHT SUPPORT DERBYSHIRE FINANCES 2018/2019 | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Expenditure | £ |
| All Resource Centres | 416 |
| Hospital Service | 37,678 |
| Living Well at Home Project | 25,700 |
| North East Derbyshire Project | 59,395 |
| Youth Support | 13,111 |
| Sporting Social & Leisure | 17,060 |
| County Services | 198,362 |
| Low Vision Service | 97,935 |
| Purchase of Aids & Equipment | 7,803 |
| Support Costs | 139,676 |
| Total Cost of Services | 597,136 |
| Generating Funds & Publicity | 63,936 |
| Total Expenditure | 661,072 |

| 2018/2019 | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Income | £ |
| Donations | 43,540 |
| Legacies | 281,625 |
| Fundraising Activities & Events | 28,799 |
| Grants – inc Joint Finance | 179,278 |
| Statutory Contracts | 326,924 |
| Sale of Aids & Equipment | 11,739 |
| Sporting & Social Contributions | 5,409 |
| Interest on Investments | 2,887 |
| Other Income | 223 |
| Total Income | 880,424 |
| Surplus for year | 219,352 |

| Resources | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| General Funds - May be used for any authorised activity | 350,100 |
| Designated Funds - Fixed Asset Fund Premises Fund | 6,916 291,741 |
| Restricted Funds - Must be spent in accordance with Donor's wishes | 41,706 |
| Total Funds | 690,463 |
| Represented by | |
| Tangible Assets | 6,916 |
| Investments | 5,100 |
| Net Current Assets - Stock, Debtors, Cash & Deposits less Creditors | 678,447 |
| Total Net Assets | 690,463 |

Acknowledgements for 2018/19

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
Bolsover District Council (Mayors Charity)
Chesterfield Royal Hospital Charitable Trust
Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Talking Newspaper
Convent of the Holy Name, Derby
Derby City Council
Derby Merlin Round Table
Derby Riverlights Limited
Derbyshire CCGs
Enhanced Vision / Optelec Limited
Erewash Borough Council (Mayors Charity)
Gem's Cash for Kids
Lloyds Bank, Irongate, Derby
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Lubrizon
Pentagon Derby
Real World Fundraising
Reeve (Derby)
Royal Derby Hospital
T C Harrison Ford Derby
The Earl of Harrington's Angling Club
The N. Smith Charitable Settlement
The Primary Club
The Richardson Brothers Foundation
The Sobell Foundation
The Woodroffe Benton Foundation
Waitrose Limited, Ashbourne

We are also extremely grateful to those 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 benefitted 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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