The Norfolk & Norwich Association for the Blind

Helping blind and partially sighted people of all ages enjoy active and fulfilled lives

210th Annual Report 2015-2016
“I simply wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the NNAB, and maybe my son wouldn’t be either. When I started to lose my sight, I thought I was worthless. How could I possibly be a proper mum? Slowly but surely, the charity has helped me realise what I CAN do. With patience, understanding and friendship, everyone here has shown me there is life beyond sight loss.”

Carol - NNAB client and volunteer

For more than two centuries, the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind has been supporting and caring for people with little or no sight in the county. The need for our services is as great as ever, and this report gives an overview of our aims, activities and achievements for the year ending March 2016. At a time of changing leadership, it highlights success in building on our strengths, and reflects our determination to do even more to enable people with sight loss enjoy active and fulfilled lives.
The NNAB provides
- Accommodation and Care
- Community Visiting Services
- Education and Recreation

for everyone with sight loss in Norfolk

What We Do

Thomas Tawell House
Is a purpose-built care home with en-suite accommodation for 37 blind and partially-sighted residents.

Hammond Court
Is a complex of 20 warden-supported flats for independent tenants of all ages.

Equipment Centres
In Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King’s Lynn and Cromer - together with a mobile unit touring the county - provide information, advice and demonstrations of a wide range of daily living aids.

Eye Clinic Support Staff
And volunteers work closely with clinicians and nurses in four Norfolk hospitals, advising patients about all the support available from the Social Services, NNAB and a range of other charities.

Community Workers
A ten-strong team provide practical and emotional support for people with poor sight in their own homes.

Education and Recreation
From Braille to Book Clubs, Photography to Fencing, the charity organises a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities throughout the year.

Children and Young People
A hugely experienced and respected team work closely with health and education colleagues to provide practical support, learning and fun for youngsters and their families.

Charity Shop
136-140 Magdalen Street, Norwich
Open Tuesday - Saturday

“Serious Progress”
The Chairman’s View

I am pleased to report some serious progress in the affairs of the NNAB during the year to 31 March 2016. We recruited a new Chief Executive, Mike Talbot, who came to us from ITV and who started in January. Mike has now engaged with all the staff and understands our problems and opportunities. He has introduced the weekly Friday Note to improve communications and we look forward to the development of new plans for the association.

Our specialist residential care home for the visually impaired, Thomas Tawell House, was again well-occupied during the year, although we could wish for a slightly younger intake, and once again Hammond Court, our block of specialist sheltered flats, was full with a considerable waiting list. The NNAB’s equipment centres in Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King’s Lynn, Cromer and our mobile unit were all busy during the year with well over 5000 visitors. With introductory talks to groups throughout the county, alongside our community workers and sight information points in public libraries, we make sure as many people as possible are aware of what we offer.

During the year, we finalised plans to provide staff liaison officers in eye clinics at each of Norfolk’s hospitals. We’re delighted that this has had immediate beneficial effects on our relationship with NHS staff and procedures.

Our children’s services, Young Eyes and Rainbow Sparks, had a good year with lots of activities and get-togethers for theatre, music, dancing and themed parties which have been well attended and popular. Again, closer working relationships with other professionals in the juvenile sight loss sector are having tangible impacts.

It is only fair in this report to thank our award winning gardening and maintenance teams who do a fantastic job for the association. No job is too much trouble and the gardens, especially round Hammond Court and TTH, always look immaculate.

Without our volunteers we would be in grave difficulties. Every year they are simply superb and deserve huge thanks for what they do for our VIPs from driving them to appointments, befriending, helping with sports and leisure activities, social clubs, the charity shop, fundraising and holidays. We are very much indebted to them.

We must also remember the loyal, dedicated and professional staff of the NNAB who manage to make the association work as a family. This friendliness is much commented on by our visitors and those who receive our services at home. In this day and age, it is unfortunately rare.

I must particularly thank Julie Lythgoe for leading the association on an interim basis during the six months when we were without a Chief Executive in 2015. She remains our Senior Executive Officer and is now celebrating her fortieth year of service with the NNAB.

I must cordially thank all our trustees for their support and encouragement during the year, particularly Guy Gowing, my Vice Chairman, and Andrew Orves, our Treasurer.

To conclude, the NNAB is in a strong position financially, thanks to the amazing generosity of the people of Norfolk, and we will continue to do everything we can to help improve the lives of our blind and partially sighted beneficiaries.

Kit Cator
Chairman
The financial year 2015-16 saw our charity led by not one or two but three chief executives. My thanks go to Max Marriner, who left the NNAB in fine fettle last summer and returned to show me the ropes some months later. I also owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Julie Lythgoe, who did a wonderful job as acting CEO and has been hugely supportive since I started at the turn of the year.

So what sort of organisation did I discover when I arrived in January? I began by chatting individually to every member of staff and a clear picture emerged of a charity with a great sense of history, a varied and valued sense of purpose and a view that there is scope to adapt to meet future challenges.

As clearly illustrated by this annual report, the association is as busy now as it has ever been and demand for our services is only likely to increase. An ageing population, increasing incidence of obesity and diabetes and continuous medical advances are combining to put ever more pressure on eye clinics. We pursue vigorously our key aims of accommodation, care, food and love and kindness.

It’s essential that any organisation with the history and heritage of our association pauses every now and then to take stock. We will be commissioning a client review of all our services to ensure our valuable funds are spent in the very best way possible. A year ago, my predecessor said in his annual report that the national economy was firmly on the mend and pre-election uncertainties were a distant memory. Now, post-referendum uncertainties look set to rock the financial boat once more.

Competition for charity funding in Norfolk is keener than ever and we must strive to keep our message in front of the public. To that end, we’re undertaking a branding exercise involving all our staff, trustees, volunteers and clients. The NNAB is in a great position to build on its rock-solid reputational and financial foundations, working ever harder to enable people with sight loss in Norfolk to lead active and fulfilling lives.

Mike Talbot
Chief Executive Officer

Nobody knows our charity better than the Senior Executive Officer Julie Lythgoe. She’s seen a vast amount of change in four decades but, she says, one thing has stayed exactly the same.

For many years, visitors to the association have commented on the warm welcome they receive and how the NNAB feels like one big family. Nothing has changed, as you can see for yourself when we host a party, fundraising event or any other kind of get-together. Our staff really do work as a team – sometimes with far too much hilarity! This year we’ve seen a few changes as people retire or move on. However, we still retain many staff who have been loyal to the association for a very long time, some of them over 20 years. In recognition of this great service, they will receive a much-deserved extra week’s holiday.

It’s been another extremely busy year. I remember when John Child was here and we were discussing doing something or other “but only when we get a quiet moment”. It never came then and there hasn’t been one since! But that’s just how I like it. The maintenance team should be commended for their hard work in keeping the site a healthy and safe place to work and live. Gary has been on the course, sat the exam and qualified as our Health & Safety Advisor. It was very hard work but we are delighted to be in safe hands!

Well done all of you in Thomas Tawell House for making the residents’ time, however long or short, a happy one by giving them the best care, food and love and kindness.

Many thanks also to the Hammond Court wardens for the support, advice, and again love and kindness you lavish on our tenants, making them all feel safe and secure whilst they live their lives independently. To all the staff in the Activity Centre who make everyone feel welcome and at ease; to the Community Workers who visit people newly-registered with sight loss and help them realise they can still lead active and fulfilling lives. Last but by no means least, thanks to the office staff – the cogs in the wheel that supports all our departments in so many ways. Thank you for all you do and for your loyalty and commitment.

Julie Lythgoe
Senior Executive Officer
152 children and young people supported
- Innovative Joint Vision Clinics
- Close partnership with Norfolk’s Virtual School Sensory Support

YoungEyes

Sight loss can present enormous challenges for children of all ages and their families - but the care, advice and support provided by the NNAB can make a real difference.

Huslinda and Zaidi’s son Yash was diagnosed with Pigmentary Retinopathy at just three months old. The condition affects his central vision and makes him severely sight impaired.

“We didn’t know how much Yash could see and our world became as dark as his. But people with YoungEyes have always made us believe things that seemed impossible for Yash were actually possible. Now Yash is 2, he has grown to become a very confident, independent, adventurous and cheerful little boy. Activities with Rainbow Sparks teach us and Yash’s three siblings to be more sensitive to what Yash needs to lead a greater life ahead. He is no longer afraid of height, big space and loud noise. He is preparing himself for a world created for those who can see. With our sincere heart, thank you again for the kind support you have given us. We now learn to understand that being blind or visually impaired does not hamper one from living, but instead he will lead people around him to see life from a different perspective.”

YoungEyes - An A to Z

Specialist Dorothy Bowen leads our hugely experienced team supporting children and young people with sight loss, and their families.

A is for Achievement . . .
from learning how to play and walk unaided to an eDigital Competence Certificate for a teenager, we salute them all.

B is for Bravery . . .
from the individual youngster learning new skills like using a long cane or going for an interview, to families facing the challenge of sight loss together.

C is for Celebration . . .
from special occasions to holidays, partying is something YoungEyes takes very seriously!

As space is limited, we must leave the in-between letters for another day and move on to the last four.

W is for Working Together . . .
YoungEyes is an active part of the support network in Norfolk for vision-impaired young people and all those who care for them. Working with Virtual School Sensory Support (VSSS), we have hosted an Access to Reading Day for teaching and support staff from Norfolk Schools, a Life Skills Day when young people practised their presentation and interview skills and a Maths Day for Tactile Learners. Together with VSSS, we also host a quarterly Joint Vision Clinic for families, staffed by a team of clinicians from the Norwich and Norfolk University Hospital.

X is for Xtra special volunteers and support . . .
We don’t just seek solutions. We offer consistent acceptance and unconditional support. We’re there for the long haul. We’re part of the journey.

Y is for YES WE CAN . . .
always the YoungEyes Motto.

Z is for ZIG ZAG! . . .
YoungEyes has started its own stylish tradition of finishing each party session with a zig zagging Conga Dance going in and out of the Bradbury Activity Centre many times!!
This year, the NNAB has been building on the resources it offers to support the vital work of hospital eye clinics around the county. Each of the four clinics, in Great Yarmouth, King’s Lynn, Cromer and Norwich, now has its own dedicated NNAB support worker, helped by an experienced group of volunteers. The aim is for them to become an integral part of the eye clinic teams, offering practical and emotional support at what is often a stressful and confusing time for patients.

Helen Wade is now working exclusively at the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital’s ophthalmology department.

"The Norfolk and Norwich eye clinic is incredibly busy. The nursing and clinical staff work really hard to keep everything running smoothly and it’s great to be able to play a part in that. We have time to talk to patients, give them information and advice, and access to all the support offered by the NNAB and other agencies."

Helen Wade

Rosemary Knell has been the face of the NNAB at Gorleston’s James Paget Hospital for over a year. She attended the RNIB’s Eye Clinic Liaison Officer training course and has been busy forging links with other sight loss charities and support groups.

"The support and encouragement from all members of staff I receive daily is truly amazing, and the feedback from patients has been overwhelming."

Rosie Knell

"She has a friendly disposition that the patients warm to and they feel at ease as she is able to offer them and their families both emotional support and advice regarding registration and referral to other agencies."

Loretta Poundall, Clinical Ophthalmology Nurse Specialist
The NNAB’s team of ten Community Workers (CWs) play a leading role in enabling people with little or no sight in Norfolk to lead fulfilling and independent lives in their own homes. Team leader Sally Read reflects on a busy year.

In October, we said a fond farewell to Carol Barnes, one of the very first CWs who worked at the NNAB for 25 years. She is missed by both the team and many of her clients. In the Spring, we were pleased to welcome Jayne Holder, who has now been fully trained and ‘set free’ in the Breckland area!

Our current records show that the oldest client visited in recent months is almost 105 years of age and in April the average number of clients allocated to each CW was 365. The majority of the team work part-time hours so this is quite a caseload to manage.

Over the last year we have helped more than 100 clients make applications for Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payments. The total resulting annual income, which they may otherwise not have received, amounts to a massive £335,000.

We take time to listen and allow our clients (and sometimes their friends and family) to express how they are feeling. Building confidence and trust is so very important, enabling us to support our clients so they can maintain and regain independence in many aspects of their lives. We are also able to put them in touch with groups and activities taking place around the county, or perhaps link them with one of our amazing volunteer befrienders or telefriends.

On a more practical level, we advise on, deliver and set up a variety of equipment, apply for grants, make applications for talking books, newspapers and Blue Badges and write letters of support. We also give talks to residents in sheltered accommodation where others may benefit from basic advice regarding failing sight and to raise awareness.

One of the main pieces of equipment we carry around in the boot of our cars is a hacksaw! Walking sticks are made in one size but our clients come in a variety of heights so we have been trained to cut and measure the sticks, vital for the stability of the user.

As you would expect, throughout the course of our work, we liaise with, refer to, and co-work with many other charities and agencies for the benefit of our clients, including the NHS and Social Services.

This year we have noticed a marked increase in the number of new clients who are experiencing sight problems and undergoing treatment, but who have yet to be registered. To be able to offer much-needed support at this early stage is vital and greatly appreciated.

My Community Worker has helped me with emotional support, listening to my anger and frustration about my sight loss and has helped me in coming to terms with it. I think it is lovely that she comes even though I am not registered. I feel comforted to know that I am not alone and to know that if my sight gets worse there is someone there I can talk to.

Audrey

Community Workers

3649 people with sight loss living independent lives in their own homes, with support and advice from the NNAB

105 - the oldest client visited by our Community Workers

£335,000 - the amount of additional benefits received by clients after advice from our team
Sight loss creates many practical challenges in daily life, but most of them can be overcome with the help of specialist equipment. From filling a cup to filling a document, Simon Marshall and his team have all the kit and all the know-how:

The right thing, at the right time, for the right job, can make all the difference. We not only supply the equipment but advise on choices and provide support and training when we need to.

The NNAB Equipment and Information Centres are dedicated to supplying everything needed to help people with sight problems get to grips with life. We start by suggesting little adjustments that might help and only when the easy things have been tried do we consider more complicated solutions.

We can source and supply a huge range of equipment, from the simplest things in the kitchen, like marker bumps and liquid level indicators, right through to the latest smartphone technology and talking CCTVs. This year, we’ve launched workshops to demonstrate the accessible features which can turn phones and tablet computers into invaluable aids for visually impaired people.

To spread the word, we go out into the county, visiting libraries, attending shows and community events, and we have a Mobile Equipment & Information Centre (MEIC). Wherever we are, people come to see us to try out the latest gadgets, look at something they’ve had recommended, get a new battery for their talking watch – or just have a cup of tea and a chat.

On The Road
"The number of first time visitors to the MEIC continues to grow, as we park it in high-profile locations around the county. However, it is becoming harder to get permission from supermarkets to set up the MEIC in their car parks. In fact, finding safe and secure parking areas is becoming a constant battle but one we are determined to keep winning."

We also regularly host visits from schools, colleges and the Prince’s Trust, discussing what it is like to have a vision impairment, what equipment and ideas help those with poor sight, and how to offer them appropriate help."

Richard Polley

At first, the simple things in life seemed so difficult - making a cup of tea, knowing the time. But there are gadgets to help, and they don’t all cost a fortune.

Equipment & Information

5578 visitors given help, advice and equipment

04 - centres in Great Yarmouth, King’s Lynn, Cromer and Norwich

01 mobile unit touring the county
Phone A Friend

11 blind and visually impaired volunteers, calling
80 people every week, offering an understanding chat

I know every call can make a difference. It’s really enjoyable talking to all the people, hearing what they have to say. I feel like I’m making a difference.

Telefriend Volunteer Dennis

Now in its 18th year, the NNAB Telefriends service continues to provide a hugely valued friendly voice each week on the phone. Our volunteers have their own list of people to call, each specifically matched so they can empathise with the particular challenges being faced by their “Telefriends.” The service is generally aimed at people who for a variety of reasons are isolated and finding recent sight loss difficult to come to terms with, and our trained volunteers can identify with this. We are now proud to have three people using the service who are over 100 and still find plenty to chat about each week.

The Telefriends service means lots of different things to both the volunteers and the clients. This was highlighted recently when Peggy, now nearly 103, had to give up her own home and re-settle into residential care, but still wished to receive weekly phone calls from her Telefriend.

Mark Smith
I love living here. The NNAB helps me live an independent life. I really like the arts and craft classes and now I’m using circular needles to knit a skirt.

Hammond Court resident Kate

“Hammond Court is a wonderful place to be. The tenants are a joy to be around and each one brings something to the fold – from the 26 year old, to the 102 year old who says (in her Geordie accent) that “she ain’t giving up yet!”

The waiting list for our supported housing grows. When I’m asked how long people might have to wait, I say that I have no idea as there are no signs of any of them going anywhere yet! It’s evident that Hammond Court is a place where people know they will be happy, safe and secure.

Julie Lythgoe

Hammond Court
Independent living in flats designed with poor sight in mind

20 flats
02 wardens
01 sense of real community

“The community at Hammond Court looks out for everyone.”

One year on, and Hammond Court sees the delights of our now well-established courtyard garden. The brightness and smells come through and the tenants are enjoying spending time there relaxing. The guide dog run is used daily and it is wonderful to see the dogs playing and having fun – it’s not all about the tenants you know!

Our new warden Jeanette has settled in well. She and Anna have a great working relationship and the three of us are often seen making the most of the garden, putting the world to rights or thinking about what events to have next for the tenants. Maria Aldus keeps in touch and volunteers when she can (I knew she wouldn’t or couldn’t let go completely!)

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I like the social part of it, meeting new people and learning new skills.

Doreen

The kindness and atmosphere created by this place and its staff has given me a new lease of life.

Don

Take It Easy

18 leisure groups
11 theatre trips
09 audio book clubs

We all get on as a group and are all treated as one. Long may it continue!

Alan

I love to do all different types of art and new things. I find it relaxing.

Louise

I enjoy this group immensely. It puts me in touch with my art work and coming here is good company.

Gerry

From creating art to enjoying the arts, from taking photographs to taking tea, the NNAB enables people with sight loss to enjoy a huge range of activities. Mark Smith, supported by Elaine Rowe, runs the show:

This year, we have again organised leisure activities across the county and beyond. We try to find a number of new and exciting places to visit, and have ventured slightly further afield with trips into Cambridge for our Gardeneyes and Heritage groups; also to Anglesey Abbey, the Fitzwilliam Museum, and the Duxford Imperial War Collection.

One highlight in August was an “Art of Touch” exhibition held at the Forum in Norwich, with our photography group, (EffstopEyes), the Arts@Bradbury groups and our Creative writing group, all putting on a superb public exhibition. This gave us an ideal opportunity to showcase the talents of our members and also to illustrate what can be achieved by a blind or visually impaired photographer, artist or writer.

Our much loved audio book clubs continue in the County Libraries and during the last year 108 book titles have been handed out across our 9 groups to members for their personal enjoyment at home, followed by lively discussions in the meetings. My thanks must go to all Library staff and Jan Holden from the County Council Library service for her continued help and support for these invaluable groups.

This year saw our busiest ever theatre programme with 11 performances, ranging from Carousel to the Jersey Boys. Our visits include a behind-the-scenes touch tour, a walk around the stage and set and full audio description during the performances. Plans are also in place for upgraded audio description technology at the Theatre Royal Norwich, which has an excellent assisted performance programme, and provides a huge amount of help with our group visits.

Meanwhile, our weekly arts and craft groups continue to flourish, attracting new members who are enjoying a wide variety of activities including mosaic and fabric painting.

As always, we’re hugely grateful to all our volunteers for their invaluable help, whether with sighted guiding, minibus or car driving, administration or working one-to-one with a VIP. The time, skills and support from our volunteers is absolutely vital to the success of our leisure activities here at the NNAB, and I would especially like to thank them all.
Sport For All

“We would like to thank each and every one of the volunteers who give up their precious time to help organise and run all of these activities. It makes a real difference to us and without them it just wouldn’t happen - so THANK YOU!”

This year, we’ve been running no fewer than 15 different sporting activities across the county with the help of our team of exceptional volunteers.

From ten pin bowling to tandem rides, from sailing to self-defence and short mat bowls to shuffleboard, we’ve been enabling our members to enjoy a rich and varied programme.

Off Road 4x4 driving, archery, darts, horse riding and tennis are just some of the other sports to which a visual impairment is not a barrier.

Short and indeed long walks continued to be popular in different parts of Norfolk (usually with well-earned refreshment!), while shuffle board is enjoyed in Cromer and there is a dedicated boccia group in Norwich.

Boccia is a Paralympic sport, a bit like petanque, and our players are becoming increasingly competitive. They have taken part in contests organised by their coach, Roy McGee, at the UEA Sportspark.

Our sailing trips run by the Nancy Oldfield Trust remain very popular.

Holidays

Our holidaymaker numbers have dropped considerably over the last few years, so we now concentrate on running summer and Christmas breaks to the wonderful Burlington Palm Hotel in Great Yarmouth.

On the summer break, our minibus takes guests out on a couple of day trips, one of which is aboard the Southern Comfort paddle boat in Horning. They do love a boat trip - the tranquillity of the voyage plus the on-board beverages are always a hit!

Our holidaymakers also visited the Gorleston Pavilion Theatre for the Summertime Variety Show. The theatre and staff are brilliant and they make sure front row tables are set aside for our group.

The Christmas break at the hotel is also always full of entertainment, from bingo sessions to singers and even a visit from Father Christmas with gifts for all.

Our holiday helpers – Jean and Gordon Benson - are the big stars. Without them, their warm hearts and enthusiasm, it simply wouldn’t be the same. From making sure everyone is down for breakfast and dinner, to not losing guests in the shops on the trips up and down Regent Street, they keep the holidays running like clockwork.

A big big thank you also goes to all the volunteer drivers who continue to help transport the holidaymakers to the hotel. We really appreciate everyone who gives up their time to help.

Donna Hewitt
Thomas Tawell House
Specialist residential care where sight loss is not an issue

37 places for blind and partially sighted residents
93 their average age
897,000 the number of tea bags consumed at the NNAB in a year!

I really felt the warmth and care. Food was excellent - no wonder the residents live so long!

“...it was in Thomas Tawell’s day, as residents are supported and cared for by trained, dedicated staff, who do their best to improve and assist in the tasks of daily living.

The renovated Courtyard, has been greatly enjoyed by residents and their guests, providing a quiet, peaceful haven to relax in. The new guest flat is proving to be a great success and very popular with residents’ relatives and friends.

Sharon Gaul
Head of Home
I really like volunteering as I get to work with a charity which is bursting with fantastic people and it’s a brilliant way to socialise and make new friends.”

Craig

What Can I Do To Help?

15,040 hours of work contributed by our volunteers, worth £108,288, equivalent to 7.8 full time members of staff

Volunteering continues to be popular for people of all ages and we are fortunate to have both younger people looking to gain experience as well as an older generation wanting to give back to the community and use their spare time to help others. We also have strong partnerships with the Norwich School and the University of East Anglia. Volunteering with us provides an excellent opportunity for the students to learn some essential transferable skills which in turn enables the NNAB to promote diversity in the workplace and contribute to good standards of practice.

We are constantly inspired by the dedication of our volunteers and all they continue to achieve. It is truly heart-warming to see them making such a huge impact throughout Norfolk and quite literally changing the lives of those visually impaired people they come into contact with. What is also so encouraging is how our volunteers seem to genuinely enjoy the time that they spend with us and get so much pleasure from all that they do.

Volunteering really does play an integral role throughout the NNAB and our strong team of volunteers provides an invaluable service throughout our community.

Fiona Edwards
Volunteer Services Co-ordinator

“We just couldn’t do without them - it’s as simple as that.”
Visual Awareness Training

In 2015-16, 100 people attended training courses run by the NNAB.

Don’t you have a friend who can read to you?

People who are visually impaired have “super” hearing, don’t they?

Our Visual Awareness course provides the information and understanding needed to assist people with poor sight. The training enables more effective communication and gives an insight into the barriers visually impaired people may face. This one day course is attended by all our volunteers and staff. We are pleased to provide this training to NHS Eye Clinic staff and other organisations, employers and public service providers throughout Norfolk.

The training includes:
- Myths and Stereotypes
- Eye conditions and simulation of their effects
- Practical guiding skills
- Appropriate language
- Technology and Assistive Equipment
- Information about the NNAB

The interactive and engaging course enables participants to minimise the barriers faced by people living with sight loss.

West Norfolk
Situated on the outskirts of King’s Lynn, the West Norfolk Equipment and Information Centre is ideally located to welcome visitors from all around the west of the county; and welcome them we do - 1200 visitors came through the door last year and all were greeted by a member of our small but friendly team of staff and volunteers.

Some of those visitors were familiar faces, but many were visiting for the first time, unsure of what to expect, but pleasantly surprised by what they found; a Centre stocked with a comprehensive display of equipment, from the most basic easy-to-see watch, to the most sophisticated, high powered desktop magnifier. Our records show that most people, after visiting for the first time, will come back. We treat everyone who visits as an individual, understanding that just because they may have the same eye condition, their needs and wants will be different.

With the support of our Norwich Equipment Centre, last year we were again fortunate to host six exhibitions with various suppliers of equipment, giving visually impaired people the opportunity to get hands-on with the newest gadgets or try out the latest innovations in technology. The centre is also home to a vibrant and busy schedule of activities for people with sight loss. Cookery and keep fit classes; knitting and social groups, shuffleboarding and long walks - there’s something for everyone.

We work closely with staff from the sensory team and we encourage visits from other organizations or agencies involved with helping people with sight loss.

In order to be accessible to as many visitors as possible, no appointment is needed to visit the Centre, so please come along and find out for yourself; you would be very welcome.

Angela Revell and Niki Richardson

Great Yarmouth
Our Centre on Hall Quay is the place to go for advice, information, equipment and social activities. There is a Games Club every Thursday, a Craft Club on Fridays, together with monthly book clubs, coffee mornings and walks. There is a good selection of our specialist equipment to try out, and if what you need isn’t available we can find it for you or signpost as needed.

The Centre is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 1pm. You can pop in or call to make an appointment on 01493 745973.
Fundraising

91p in every pound we raise goes directly to help people in Norfolk with poor or no sight

The charity works tirelessly to raise awareness and thinks outside the box with fundraising activity. I have also been really impressed with how involved they are in the local business community.

Charlotte Disney - Leathes Prior Solicitors

My Nan was resident in TTH before she passed away. I wanted to run and fundraise for the charity to repay them for the wonderful service they provided.

James Buxton – London Marathon Runner

It’s been yet another enjoyable and exciting year working within the fundraising department of the NNAB. Generating income for the charity is in many ways a challenge for us all but witnessing, at first hand, the personal benefits finance brings to visually impaired adults and children gives us all a great sense of satisfaction and inspires us to drive on and achieve even more.

Our fundraising has remained both imaginative and fun on every level and as always there are a number of different ways in which we’ve brought in the money. Community fundraising has included crucial local flag days and street collections conducted by a hard core of volunteers with a strong sense of determination and dedication. Raffles, auctions, music nights and the sale of Christmas cards are just some of the ways the general public have contributed.

In terms of one-off events last year, Gala Balls, blind dining nights, fashion shows and golf days were again organised to entice contributions from the business community. We even constructed extreme sports fundraising events such as bungee jumping and riding the giant zip wire in Wales – the fastest in Europe! All these initiatives contributed crucially to the generation of income for the NNAB.

Our business partners continued in their support for us with Aquaterra Energy, Barclays, NW Brown and Leathes Prior particularly influential in creating both awareness and funds. So much participation from so many businesses, individuals and volunteers and we extend our sincere heart-felt thanks to them all for their valued contributions.

We appreciate the kind generosity of so many and we, as a team, optimistically look forward to the next year of fundraising for the NNAB.

Jeremy Goss, Donna Minto & Hollie Gooda

The NNAB is an excellent charity that makes a big difference to people’s lives and we want to be part of the fantastic work they do.

John Rainbow - Aquaterra Energy
Income UP 31%
Expenditure UP 9%

Financial Summary

Every penny raised in Norfolk and spent in Norfolk

The figures presented in the financial summary have been taken from the audited financial statements but do not constitute summary financial statements. Audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 can be requested from the NNAB (registered charity number 207060), or accessed via the Charity Commission website.

“Exceptional performance”
The Treasurer’s Report

Against the backdrop of an ever-challenging environment for the third sector, we produced an exceptionally good financial performance for the year to 31 March 2016. We returned a surplus on our activities of £305,300 and, despite a fall in the value of our investments in the year, our net funds increased by £89,316. This compares to a fall in the previous year of £35,057.

Our income from legacies this year was £857,314, and this represents our highest annual amount for more than ten years. We are of course unable to predict our legacy income from year to year, but the fact that we continue to receive significant amounts every year is surely a reflection of the fantastic work our charity does, and the effect it has on the blind and visually impaired of Norfolk. Our fundraising income increased considerably from the previous year, boosted by our hosting of the Norfolk Show Ball. Great effort was put into this event by our fundraising team, and all staff of the association, and we realised a surplus of £35,000 from the ball. Our community fundraising, and income from voluntary events, also continue to provide significant amounts of revenue to the association. Income from our investments portfolio was up on the previous year by over 10%.

The occupancy level in our residential home, Thomas Tawell House, remained at economic levels throughout the year, and the flats at Hammond Court continue to be fully occupied. As ever, both Hammond Court and Thomas Tawell House provide a relaxing and friendly environment for our blind and visually impaired residents.

Thanks go to our finance team, and to all the staff and volunteers of the association, without whose hard work and dedication we would not be in this strong financial position.

Andrew Orves
Our income was **£2,423,467**

Our expenditure was **£2,118,167**
Loyal Supporters

This year we have once again received fantastic financial support from friends, volunteers, business partners and independent donors.

Special thanks must go to solicitors Leathes Prior; Becks Motorhomes; Sainsbury’s in Queen’s Road, Norwich; and Enid Stanbrook-Evans who raised an amazing £4500 for us by organising a ball to celebrate her 70th birthday.

Legacies

The following have been gratefully received:

£
Jean Connelly 410
Dr Ruth Roseveare 1,117
Nancy Southwell 250
Betty May Campbell 2,000
Joanna Bussey 100
Beryl Gammon 35,000
Cicely Short 15,000
Eileen Edney 100
George Sandham 5,000
Ivy Kate Saunders 1,000
Patricia Clarke 650,000
Beryl Gammon 6,466
Peter Fenn Royalties 72
James Lister 9,003
Mrs Freitag 1,000
Pauline Shanahan 4,000
Frank Bampton 20,000
Evelyn Cavill 80,000
Phyllis Dant 500
Income Tax Recovered 586

£
Previous year’s adjustments - 10,290
Total - unrestricted 821,314
Phyllis Machin - restricted to West Norfolk 36,000
Total per audited accounts 857,314

Donations have been received from a huge range of people, businesses and organisations. Here are just a few of those that helped make our work possible:

- Aquaterra Energy
- Right Angle Events
- Mundesley Golf Club
- Barclays Bank
- Langley School
- DixieMix Jazz Band
- Almary Green
- Pier Hotel Gorleston
- Jarrolds
- Steve Jenkins Design
- NW Brown
- Waitrose
- Tim Hirst
- Ros Tann
- The Cringleford Singers
- Wiltshire Farm Foods
- James Pullen
- Jan and Laura Grace
- Lexham Hall
- Stody Hall
- NR Care
- Anglia Farmers
- Edith Murphy Trust
- Radio Norwich Kids Trust
- Becks Motorhomes
- The Purdy Family
- Gary Parkins
- Matthew Reil
- Amber McEwan

Julie Lythgoe
Four Decades of Service to the NNAB

In the past forty years, the NNAB has seen five superintendents, directors and chief executives; hundreds of staff - and one Julie Lythgoe. Our Senior Executive Officer joined the charity straight from school and has been at the heart of the organisation ever since. Her vast experience, sound judgement and great sense of humour continue to make a real difference to the thousands of people we support with sight loss across Norfolk. Julie, we salute you!
Talking Newspapers

There are 10 independent Talking Newspapers covering the County, these are:

Chatterbox – Norwich
Contact: 01603 765365
email: chatterbox.norwich@virgin.net

Grapevine – Gt Yarmouth
Contact: Mrs D Clarke - 01493 721133

Link-up - Thetford
Contact: Mr M Wabe – 01842 755131

The Mardler - North Norfolk
Contact: Mr Clive Taylor – 01842 755131

Talking Times - Fakenham
Contact: Mr J Carruthers - 01328 887507
e-mail: jc.ftt802@gmail.com

Three Rivers - Bungay and Beccles
Contact: Mrs C Lee – 01986 895503
email: Charmianlee743@msn.com

Acle Club for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs M Seward – 01603 715818

Attleborough Club for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs M Seward – 01603 715818

Aylsham Club for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs E Stimpson – 01603 278272
email: stimpson4@gmail.com

Fakenham Social Centre for the Blind
Secretary: Ms L Sutton – 01328 820560
email: lynette06@live.co.uk

The Hunstanton Monday Club for the Visually Impaired
Secretary: Mr S Grant Southernhay
01485 570040

Norfolk & Norwich Deafblind Club
Secretary: Ms B Carter – 01603 224087

Norwich Bowling Club
Secretary: Brian Deakins – 01603 748610
email: briandeeakins555@btinternet.com

North Norfolk Social Centre for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs J Stockdale – 01692 402562

North Norfolk Social Centre for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs J Stockdale – 01692 402562

VISION Link - King's Lynn
Contact: Mr D Gifford - 01553 631579

Waveney Words - South Norfolk
Contact: Vicci Day
vicci@kfd-architects.co.uk
01379 651746

Wisbech & District Talking Newspaper
Contact: Mrs I Shippey - 01485 570040

Wyomm & Attleborough Talking Newspaper
Contact: Mr J Carruthers - 01603 866102
email: Georgette@ValeMail.eu (Secretary) and Tony@ValeMail.eu (Chairman)

For National Newspapers and Magazines
Contact: Talking Newspaper Association of the UK (TNAUK) National Recording Centre,
10 Browning Road, Heathfield, East Sussex
TN21 8DB
01435-866102

The NNAB

Patron and Presidents

Patron
Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

President
The Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Norwich

Vice-Presidents
The Sheriff of Norwich
The Mayor of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk
The Mayor of Great Yarmouth
P Scarfe FCA

Trustee of Real Estate
The Official Custodian for Charities

Trustee of Investments
Barratt & Cooke Trustees Limited
Lovewell Blake
Barclays Bank PLC
Spire Solicitors

N Puvanachandra MB BChir MA FRCOphth
Dr S Pinto MB BS DCH DRCOG MRCGP

Board of Management

Chairman
Kit Cator

Vice-Chairman
Guy Gowing

Treasurer
Andrew Orves

Hon Consultant Ophthalmologist
Dr Pinto MB BS DCH DRCOG MRCGP

Hon Physician

Norfolk Bowling Club
Secretary: Brian Deakins – 01603 748610
email: briandeeakins555@btinternet.com

North Norfolk Social Centre for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs J Stockdale – 01692 402562

North Norfolk Social Centre for the Blind
Secretary: Mrs J Stockdale – 01692 402562

SIGHT (Stalham)
Secretary: Mrs M Savage – 01692 580713

Swaffham Club for the Blind
Secretary: Mr A Eley (Arthur) – 01760 337654

U & Eye @ Snettisham
Secretary: Mrs D Snelgrove – 01485 540753

(1) Appointee of Norfolk County Council
(2) Appointee of the Lord Bishop of Norwich

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Registered Charity No. 207060