

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER, 2022 - VISION AND HEARING SUPPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

At the AGM on 17th November 2022, we were delighted to welcome Liam Clark-Brown to the Board of Trustees. Liam brings a wealth of fundraising and marketing expertise. Kathleen Harrison was re-elected and will continue in her role as Treasurer and share her valued lived experiences. Lin Elder-Atterton, MVO, continues as the Chair of the Board supported by Lynda Rhodes and Ian Hickson. Cllr Alex Geddes of Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, and Cllr Joyce Welsh, of South Tyneside Council are Co-Opted Trustees. Thank you to all of our members for voting. If you would like to become a Member, please contact us on 0191 4785959

JOIN THE BOARD

We have Board vacancies and would love to hear from you. We are recruiting for a range of skills and expertise, in particular individuals with lived experience from the Gateshead area and people with financial or healthcare knowledge. To find out more about becoming a Trustee, please contact Sarah French on 01914785959 or email contactus@visionandhearingsupport.org.uk

“I HAVE LIFE-LONG EXPERIENCE OF SIGHT LOSS AND UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO OVERCOME INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS. I JOINED THE BOARD BECAUSE I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT THE WORK VISION & HEARING SUPPORT DOES AND WANT TO MAKE SURE PEOPLE IN OUR AREA CAN ACCESS EXCELLENT SERVICES. IT’S A BIG RESPONSIBILITY BUT VERY SATISFYING TO BE PART OF THE TEAM SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANISATION. I BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO BENEFIT FROM THIS SERVICE SHOULD BE PART OF THE DECISION MAKING FOR THE FUTURE.” LYNDA RHODES, TRUSTEE

OPEN DAY JANUARY 2023

We will be holding an open day for members and individuals to find out how to get more involved. From volunteering to becoming a Trustee, we would love to hear from you. The open day will be held on Thursday 19th January 2023, 11.30am-1pm. Come and meet our Team, Volunteers and Trustees to find out how you can get involved. RSVP to Claire Parker at claire.parker@visionandhearingsupport.org.uk

COMMUNITY VOICE

We have joined forces with Your Voice Counts and Bliss=Ability to help people access activities and services in the community through peer support and volunteering.

The project will work with people who have learning disabilities, autism and people who are at risk of exclusion due to disability, sight loss or who are Deaf or hard of hearing. For more information please contact Craig on 07867721636.

"VISION & HEARING SUPPORT HELPED ME GET THROUGH AND GAVE ME CONFIDENCE AFTER SIGHT LOSS, AND ACTUALLY GAVE ME BACK MY LIFE" SERVICE USER, 2022

A FUTURE YOU

In partnership with South Tyneside Council and ACTS, A Future You aims to connect you to the people, activities and services that can keep you well, help you prevent ill health and maintain your quality of life. Contact the team on 08009961864 to find out more.

TALKING TOGETHER

Our vision impairment counselling provides one-to one and group counselling sessions, including for friends and family. Delivered by a professional counsellor with lived experience, the service is part of a comprehensive pathway designed to provide the right support at the right time. For more information contact Claire at claire.campbell@visionandhearingsupport.org.uk

"I HAD HIT A BRICK WALL AND DIDN'T THINK I COULD FIND A WAY BACK, BUT YOU HAVE LIFTED ME OUT OF MY DEPRESSION AND TALKED ME BACK TO HAVING A REASON TO GO ON. YOU HAVE HELPED ME BACK TO LIVING MY LIFE AGAIN"
SERVICE USER, 2022

VOLUNTEERING

Vision & Hearing Support Volunteers have made over 1000 tele-befriending calls this year, providing essential social support for people living with sensory loss. We connect people to relevant peer support groups including; the weekly Men's Shed Group, Macular and Glaucoma peer support groups in Gateshead, a Glaucoma group in South Tyneside and a hard of hearing group in both Gateshead and South Tyneside. For more information, contact Claire Parker at claire.parker@visionandhearingsupport.org.uk

WELL CONNECTED

We have secured five year funding for digital and tech support for people with sensory loss. Working with ACTS, Age Gateshead and Your Voice Counts we will provide one-to-one and peer support, a tech lending library and cyber security information. For more information contact Karen on 07919407648.

HOLISTIC ASSESSMENTS

We provide holistic assessments to help people stay independent at home. We take time to understand what is important to individuals and make a plan to help achieve personal goals. This can include aids and adaptations to make every day living tasks more manageable and access to our Living Well with Sight Loss programme. Low level BSL support also helps our Deaf clients with forms and letters. We work closely with other services to make sure people get the right help at the right time.

LOW VISION SERVICE

Our Optometrist-led low vision service offers weekly clinic appointments to clients in Gateshead with the aim of helping them to continue to make the most of their sight. A wide range of equipment can be provided including magnifiers and magnifying lamps. We do not dispense prescription glasses via our low vision service.

OUR PERFORMANCE

Since April 2022, we have worked with over 1,993 individuals. As a result of this work ...

- 80% Reported being able to live more independently
- 80% Reported feeling less isolated
- 86% Reported feeling more confident and empowered
- 87% Reported an improvement in mental health and wellbeing.

WELCOME TO NEW STAFF

Hi everyone, just a few words to introduce myself. My name is David Appleton, and as some of you are aware I have been employed as the Community Voice Project Coordinator. I have moderate hearing loss and am registered Severely Sight Impaired. I have lived with sight loss for approximately 40 years whilst working across many professional fields and hopefully some of the experience, life skills, and qualities I have picked up along the way can help myself and the team at Vision and Hearing Support to make it easier to address whatever we face together in the future.

Hi, I'm Maclaren Wharton, I'm 21 years old and have worked at Vision and Hearing Support for 7 months

helping the staff on a temporary contract before starting as the Admin Support Worker for David Appleton, helping him to fulfil his role as Community Voice Project Coordinator. In my pastime I'm a big fan of music, fantasy, fiction writing, and history and I am a big advocate for mental health awareness and am always reading upon new research around mental health. I look forward to supporting and helping the community alongside David, as well as the rest of the team at Vision and Hearing Support.

Hi I'm Claire and I am the new Volunteer Officer for Vision and Hearing Support as part of the Community Voice Project. I have many years experience as a volunteer and supporting volunteers in the charity sector. I have been visually impaired since birth and have a strong passion for making a positive difference for people with sight loss. Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my husband and 2 King Charles Cavalier dogs. I also really enjoy music and can often be found at live music events or going to the theatre. I am excited to be part of the team, getting to know everyone and catching up with some familiar faces.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

As I settle into my new role as the Volunteer Officer I am keen to chat to anyone who may be interested in volunteering. We are currently looking for volunteers to support us.

If you would like to volunteer or find out more about our volunteer opportunities please contact Claire Parker, claire.parker@visionandhearingsupport.org.uk or call 0191 4785959.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE VIP FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The VIP Friendship Group invite you to their Christmas Lunch

on Monday 19th December, 12.00 noon,
at the All Saints Centre, Stanley Street, South Tyneside
booking is required

Tickets are £2.50 per person, and include 2 strips of raffle tickets, live entertainment and a game of human bingo. Hot food choice of: Medium chicken curry, rice and Nan bread, or sausage casserole with bread bun Desert - Brownie

Names, payment and food choice must be given by 12th December.

Please contact Winnie Hope, telephone 07516730067

CASE STUDY – ONYX

The Onyx helps visually impaired people to identify faces, text and objects. The smart glasses work by capturing an image on the built-in camera. This image is then visible to the part of the eye with suitable remaining vision.

We were lucky enough to have the Onyx for 6 weeks to show case the device and worked with Mrs N to demonstrate the Onyx and test the impact it could have, here are the results:

Mrs N is a 70-year-old woman who has Macular Degeneration and cataracts. She is severely sight impaired and has very limited residual vision. Mrs N's first comment was how light the device was. We engineered four tasks to test the Onyx:

Task 1, we asked Mrs N to tell the time from a wall clock without the device. She said "what clock?" I then asked her to put on the device and look again. She could then see the clock and read the time.

Task 2, we asked Mrs N to read a large print notice on the wall without the Onyx. Mrs N said that the wall was blank. When wearing the Onyx Mrs N was able to read what was on the sign in full.

Task 3 was to identify faces. Without the Onyx Mrs N reported that she could only see black shapes and outlines. We asked Mrs N's daughter to enter the room while Mrs N was wearing the device. Mrs N was able to see her face and, although not clearly, she stated that it was a definite improvement.

The final test, we asked Mrs N to watch a You Tube video. Without the device she could only see a white

screen. Once wearing the Onyx, she was able to identify 7 individuals including a man playing the piano and 2 people wearing orange.

Mrs N was very impressed with the device and said it was very promising. Please note we showed this device to 10 people with varying results. It is not suitable for everyone who has macular. If you would like to try any equipment in our library, please contact Karen on 0191 4785959.

WHAT'S ON..... DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Dec 2nd, CoffeeMorning @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-12noon

Dec 5th, Gateshead Macular Group @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm

Dec 5th, South Tyneside Walking Group @ Marine Park, 10.30am-12noon

Dec 6th, Woman's Weekly @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon

Dec 6th, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm

Dec 9th, Hard of Hearing Club @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-12noon

Dec 12th, Gateshead Walking Group, 10.30am-12noon (meeting point tbc)

Dec 13th, Women's Weekly, @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon

Dec 13th, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm

Dec 16th, Glaucoma Group @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-12noon

Dec 16th, Glaucoma Group @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm

Dec 19th, South Tyneside Walking Group, 10.30am-12noon (meeting point tbc)

Dec 20th, Women's Weekly, @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon

Dec 20th, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight , 1pm-3pm

Jan 9th, Gateshead Walking Group @ Saltwell Park, 10.30am-12noon.

Jan 10th, Woman's Weekly @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon

Jan 10th, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm

Jan 13th, Coffee Morning @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-12noon

Jan 16th, South Tyneside Walking Group @MarinePark, 10.30am-12noon

Jan 16th, Gateshead Macular Group @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, ,1pm-3pm

Jan 17th, Woman's Weekly@ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon

Jan 17th, Men's Shed@ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for Sight, ,1pm-3pm

Jan 19th,
[Vision&HearingSupportOpenDay@VHS,11.30am-1pm](#)

Jan 20th, Hard of Hearing Club @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-12noon

Jan 23rd, Gateshead Walking Group, 10.30am-12noon
(meeting point tbc)
Jan 24th, Women's Weekly, @ VHS, The Bradbury
Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon
Jan 24th, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for
Sight, 1pm-3pm
Jan 27th, Glaucoma Group @ Bliss=Ability, 10am-
12noon
Jan 27th, Glaucoma Group @ VHS, The Bradbury
Centre for Sight, 1pm-3pm
Jan 30th, South Tyneside Walking Group, 10.30am-
12noon(meeting point tbc)
Jan 31st, Women's Weekly, @ VHS, The Bradbury
Centre for Sight, 10am-12noon
Jan 31st, Men's Shed @ VHS, The Bradbury Centre for
Sight, , 1pm-3pm

**For more information and to book, please contact us
at 0191 4785959**