



THE
SPECTACLE
MAKERS'
CHARITY

Impact Report 2022/23





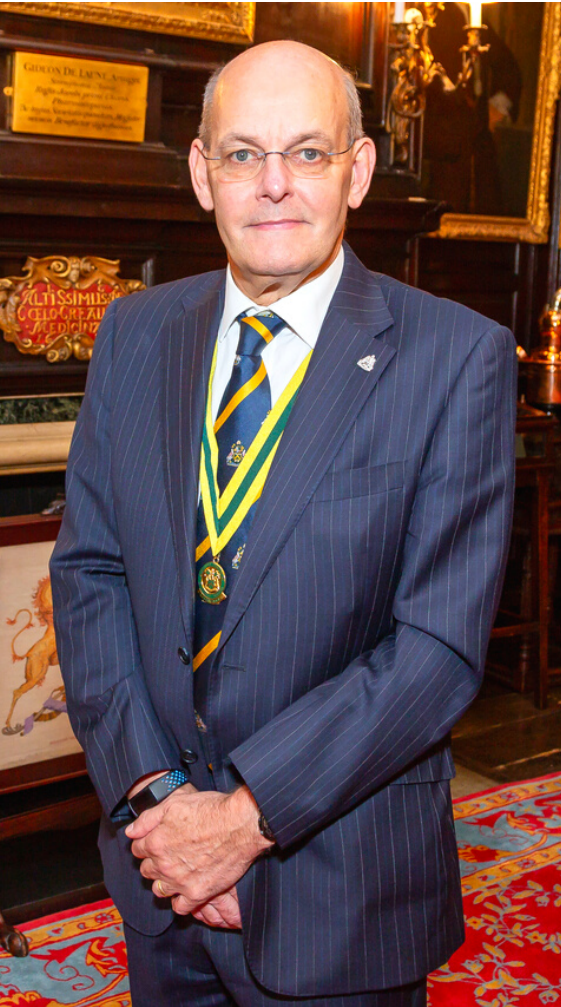
£98,645

donated across 20 charities, 18 young professionals, 3 travel awards and 2 research projects

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A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



I am honoured to take over as Chair of the Charity from Elizabeth Shilling. Being a Spectacle Makers' Charity trustee is very much a team effort and all the Trustees are involved in reviewing grant and bursary applications, and subsequent decisions. The categories of activity we help becomes wider every year and I hope you will enjoy seeing just a glimpse of how your donations have helped an even greater number of people in this last year. Subject to sufficient income, the Trustees have agreed to continue with this diversified approach.

Since its formation, the new Charity has awarded grants totalling over £263,000 to many worthy causes. This report covers the period up to 31 March 2023. It was helped significantly by a very generous donation from a past Freeman, Anne Macintosh, and the prize we award to the best bursary report is now named in her honour.

We think she would be pleased to see the direct impact of her legacy on eye health professionals of the future. If you are thinking about a legacy or making a donation, please go to www.spectaclemakers.com/Charity to find out more, call us in the office or talk to any of the Trustees at a Company, Society or online event.

On behalf of all the Trustees, thank you to all our donors, no matter how much they give, for everything they do to support our mission – to help people with a vision impairment achieve and enjoy many aspects of life; and to set the visionaries of the future on a rewarding career path.

DR DAVID PARKINS
Chair of the Board of Trustees

BLIND IN BUSINESS

Blind in Business help people who are blind or have partial sight, into work. The grant enabled an Education to Employment event which involved 14 blind and sight impaired young people and 16 employers.

The participants took part in rock climbing, a networking meal, and mock interviews. Each element offered participants the opportunity to gain confidence in themselves and to demonstrate what is possible. It was especially powerful to have the opportunity to learn from visually impaired people working across all aspects of society.

Following the course two candidates had work experience offers, one was offered a paid placement from a employer and two will have follow-up conversations. Six continue to visit the Blind in Business offices regularly for further support.





£2,350

towards digital inclusion in
Croydon

CROYDON VISION

Croydon Vision is a local organisation that aims to encourage independence, confidence, and personal development among our blind and partially sighted community. They encourage people in Croydon to re-evaluate what's possible – because there is life after sight loss. Their grant was focussed on overcoming technological and digital exclusion for young people with sight loss which has impacted over 600 people.

“The tech session I attended was very informative... lots of ideas of what type of technology is available and how accessible mobile phones can be and the diverse living aids that can help with learning, going outside, playing games and independence. Most of all it is the opportunity to meet other visually impaired children.” Jesse (young member)

DRUNKEN CHORUS

Drunken Chorus is a registered charity which curates inclusive and accessible festivals, events and creative experiences. In March 2023 they were awarded funding from The Spectacle Makers' Charity to make their festival of theatre, dance and cabaret events (A Bit Of A Do) accessible to blind and visually impaired people.

The funding has enabled training for artists and staff on integrating audio description into performances as well as supporting visually impaired audience members. It has also enabled creative workshops and performances led by visually impaired artists, as well as many more interventions aimed at creating a more inclusive festival.



£1,000

to create an accessible festival

EXTANT

Extant is the UK's leading professional performing arts company of vision impaired artists and theatre practitioners, producing touring productions and delivering training regionally and internationally.

Pathways Crew and Design consists of eight members from across the UK – who are building skills and experience in backstage theatre work. Skills areas include: access, stage management, production management, set design, sound design, lighting design, costume design, eco-scenography, props, technical production and producing. This course proved a useful stepping stone for all of the members: they now have a clearer idea of which roles they will build upon and the areas where they will need to seek collaboration or support.



£5,000

crew and design workshops
for visually impaired people

'It's definitely given me more confidence. I've been interested in sound design for a while, but I've never really tried it. So with this, I've realised I could – I could do it.'

Participant in Pathways Crew & Design



£5,000

supporting Goalball events
across the UK

GOALBALL UK

Goalball UK are the National Governing Body for the Paralympic sport of goalball in the UK, as well as operating as a charity to provide and promote sporting opportunities for blind and partially sighted people. The grant supported Goalball to generate significant interest in the sport as a result of various events and advocacy efforts:

- There were 13 different 'Have a Go' days held across cities in the UK.
- The Prince and Princess of Wales recently played Goalball
- The press and interest generated by the International Blind Sports Federation World Games enabled their digital presence to more than double from previous months.

Together these efforts are driving more awareness of the sport nationwide, ultimately enabling more people to take up the sport which has been proven to improve mental and physical wellbeing.



£1,500

towards a Magical Taxi Tour

HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVERS

The Magical Taxi Tour takes children suffering from long-term illness to Disneyland Paris for a three-day trip of a lifetime. The Spectacle Makers' Company has been a proud sponsor of the Magical Taxi Tour for a long time and it was a pleasure to be able to wave off the convoy from the City. Thank you to the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers' Charity, who continue to organise such a special and heart warming event.



£1,000

towards a mobile
information van

KENT ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

Working with over 12,500 people in Kent and the surrounding areas, the Kent Association for the Blind's focus is to provide support services to help people live as independently as they can. The grant funded the introduction of "Iris" their new mobile sight centre. Iris has enabled thousands to access eye health information and to try assistive technology. 93% were not previously known to the charity, indicating that the outreach has had a great impact on the local area.

'I cannot thank the team or emphasise enough how significant a role the IRIS bus has played in supporting my friend and I recently.'

Iris visitor, 2023

LIVING PAINTINGS TRUST



The purpose of Living Paintings Trust is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of blind and partially sighted children by supporting them in overcoming the issues of isolation and marginalisation. They do this by publishing unique Touch to See books that provide access to the visual world of pictures books and learning.

The Coronation of King Charles III promised to be a visual spectacle that brought the country together in celebration. As excitement for the event grew, it dawned on the charity that so many blind and visually impaired children would miss out on the rich imagery, history and pageantry ingrained in the ceremony. It sparked the biggest and most impactful campaign Living Paintings had launched in their 34-year history - Coronation: The Sensory Experience for Blind Children. 7,308 blind and partially sighted children benefited directly from this project.

This book especially allowed her to not only see the crown in her mind, but to verbalise what she was seeing to us. Her description matched the picture perfectly, and it was a real magical moment for us."

Mother of participant

£5,000

towards making the
Coronation accessible for
vision impaired children



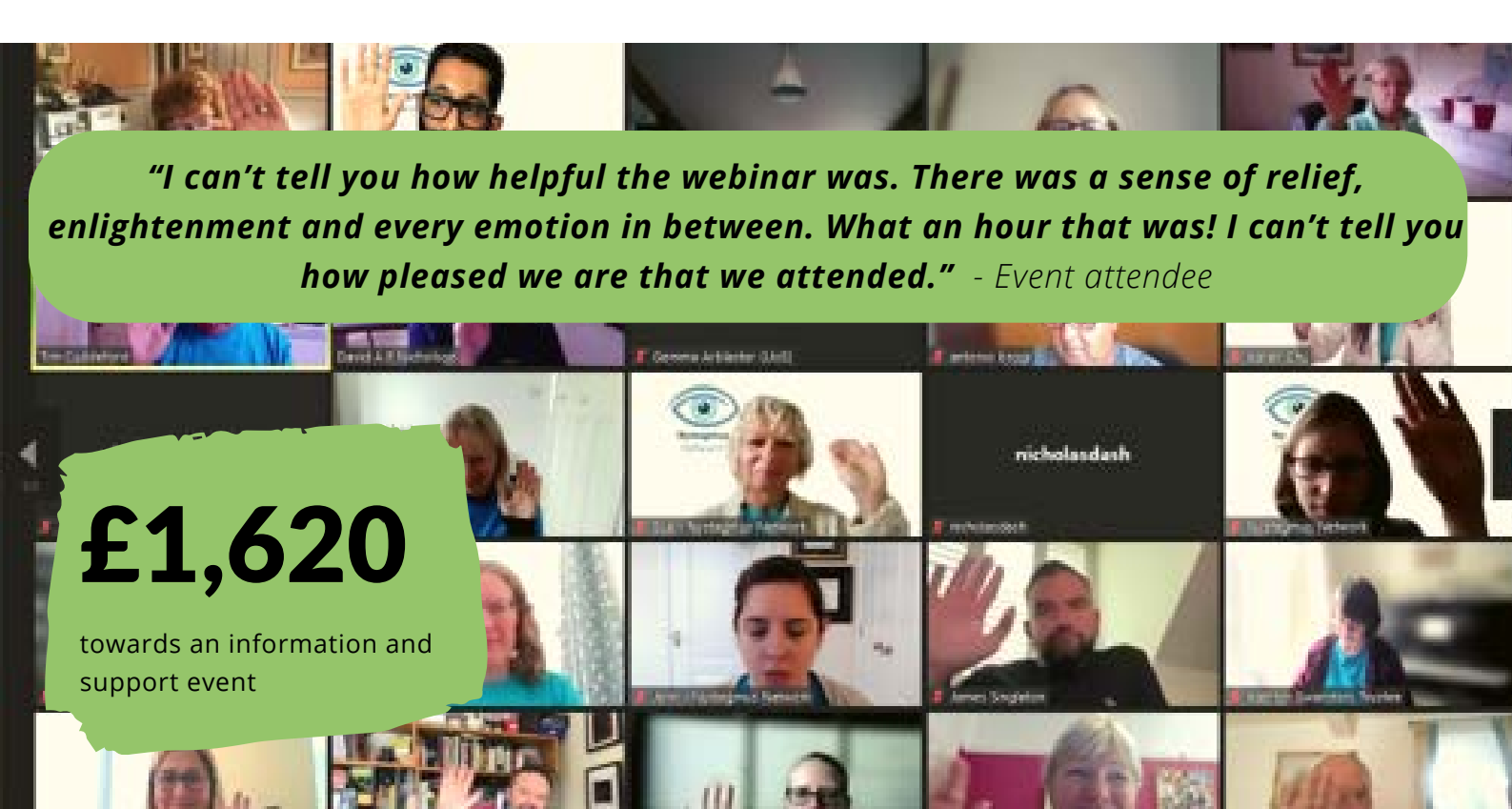
£500

towards employment opportunities for ex-offenders

NO GOING BACK

No Going Back is a unique Livery Company initiative supporting offender rehabilitation. In 2020 the Livery Companies began a collaboration to reduce re-offending. After three successful years working in partnership with “Bounce Back”, and due to its success, the Livery initiative No Going Back has now become its own independent organisation.

Under the “Bounce Back” umbrella, No Going Back worked in partnership with nearly 40 Livery Companies, and over 150 dedicated volunteers. In 3 years, it has supported nearly 2,000 participants with access to bespoke training, upskilling, employability and work readiness support, ready to move into employment.



***"I can't tell you how helpful the webinar was. There was a sense of relief, enlightenment and every emotion in between. What an hour that was! I can't tell you how pleased we are that we attended."* - Event attendee**

£1,620

towards an information and support event

NYSTAGMUS NETWORK

Nystagmus is a complex eye condition, characterised by wobbling or flickering of the eyes. The Network provides support and information, raises awareness and funds research. The grant funded an event to offer members of the nystagmus community the opportunity of direct access to eye health professionals. They were able to put their questions about nystagmus diagnosis and treatment to Ophthalmologists, Orthoptists, Optometrists and researchers. This helped them prepare for long awaited eye hospital appointments, allayed some of their anxieties and provided them with reassurance whilst they waited. 85 people attended the event.



£5,000

towards a surgical camp in
Nepal

RIDLEY FOUNDATION

The Ridley Eye Foundation is dedicated to providing quality eye care services & curing cataracts & blindness in Nepal. In 2022 the Spectacle Makers' Charity funded a cataract camp in Kakani, northwest of Kathmandu. A total of 521 individuals underwent screening at Kakani Rural Municipality and 73 cataract cases were performed during the screening process. All patients reported good vision in the post-operation examination.

RNC HEREFORD

The aim of The Royal National College for the Blind ("RNC") is to provide and promote education and training for people who are blind or visually impaired and for such people as the Governors may determine from time to time. The grant was given for the purchase of equipment and provision of training related to the development of acoustic shooting at RNC

RNC say that the success of the project is undoubtedly reflected in students wishing to sign up, then attend repeat sessions. Staff have noticed the physical benefits of good posture, controlled breathing and coordination/ concentration skills, as well as the sense of achievement – especially amongst those who might not otherwise consider themselves "sporty".



"I really enjoy it. It's such a different activity and has given me something new to talk about with my friends. I am definitely going to sign up for regular Learning and Leisure sessions" Student.

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR BLIND CHILDREN

Currently, only 1 in 4 blind people of working age are in employment. Through the Royal Society for Blind Children's Learn to Earn project blind and partially sighted young people have received individual tailored practical and emotional support from RSBC's specialist staff. This includes identifying opportunities, cv writing and interview preparation.

Young people impacted by sight loss have developed the skills and confidence to access meaningful and fulfilling employment.



" I have seen young people change their perspective from 'how do I fit in?' to 'these are the skills I have to offer'. " -

Mark, RSBC Senior Community Support Worker



£2,225

towards "Cycling 4 All"
sessions

SHEFFIELD SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind is the the primary source of services and support for people with sight loss in Sheffield and sight/hearing loss in Rotherham. Cycling 4 All cycling sessions are designed to help disabled people and people with long-term health conditions get cycling. They use a range of adapted trikes to enable people to explore. Nicky Gardner, pictured above, one of the clients from Sheffield, is taking part in her first ever Triathlon.

"Getting out on the tandem with Annette has been incredibly good for my mental and physical health. Whether we are in Hillsborough Park or exploring the Monsal trail, my confidence builds on every ride.

Nicky Gardner, Visually Impaired Triathlete



£500

for employment &
family support

SHERIFFS' & RECORDER'S FUND

The Spectacle Makers have provided a small grant to The Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund each year for many years, sometimes directly from the Company, and at other times, via The Spectacle Makers' Charity. This year we made a grant of £500.

The British prison population today is estimated at over 86,000. On release, prisoners receive £46. Lacking money, education, a job, a stable family and a home, over 70% re-offend. Their life is spent in and out of prison and this is a cycle which The Sheriffs' & Recorder's Fund aims to break.

At the critical time when a prisoner is released, the Fund gives small grants to supply a vital need – this could be provision of equipment to set up a painting or window-cleaning business; or money for school uniform for a child within the family of a recent offender. The Charity also gives larger grants to prison-based charitable schemes which work towards the rehabilitation of ex-prisoners, including retraining, improving literacy and schemes to prevent ill-treatment and exploitation of people trying to make a new life.

One example is an innovative pilot programme at HMP Isis. Ten prisoners due for release from HMP Isis were offered mentoring, together with help to get and keep work. Three prisoners left the programme and are no longer in touch but the results are positive for 7 ex-offenders. One participant was selected for an apprenticeship and salary increase, is fully employed and is enjoying family life. another is working part-time whilst caring for his mother. All are benefiting from regular contact with their mentor.



£5,000

towards provision of
assistive technology advice

SUTTON VISION

Sutton Vision aims to empower and enable visually impaired residents of Sutton to lead fulfilled and independent lives, offering a range of services around visual impairment. It supports over 500 people a year through information, advice, practical and emotional support services. The grant has helped people with sight loss to set up and use smart phones, tablets, laptops and voice activated devices using built in accessibility features such as text enlargement and voice over.

“I would like to say I am so thankful to Vicky and Sutton Vision for making such a difference to me. The reader on my phone has changed my life”.

C – a 69 year old woman who has bilateral glaucoma

VISION 2020 LINKS

The VISION 2020 LINKS Glaucoma Network aims to develop meaningful partnerships between glaucoma centres in high/middle/low-income countries, share knowledge on best practice between clinicians, centres and countries, agree shared guidelines and protocols, and develop action plans to improve glaucoma screening and treatment services.

The Glaucoma-NET website is providing the means for participants to join monthly DISC meetings and offers access to publications and resources relevant to development of glaucoma services in sub-Saharan Africa. It is being launched in October 2023.

The Glaucoma Toolkit has been revised, adapted and contextualised for use in Nigeria specifically and it has received ministerial approval from the National Council on Health (NCH). The NCH is the highest policy- and decision-making body in the Nigerian health sector. Each state is now obliged to embed it within their health plans.



£9,950

towards a website and toolkit
on glaucoma

VISTA BLIND

Vista Blind has been working in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland with people with sight loss and their families for over 160 years. Between July 2022 and Feb 2023 over 730 people were introduced to Vista through their helpline and over 560 referred to various levels of care. Keeping track of this can become difficult.

Vista's "Eye Care Journal" is a live and holistic record of individual circumstances and needs, it will link information and services from the initial contact and serve as a reminder for the next step. It will be embedded in the Triage process and ensure that blind and partially sighted people, the agencies they deal with, and their families are all on the same page.

vista

My Eye Care Journal

Name: _____

This record will help remind you of the support Vista has provided, what Vista will do next to support you, and important reminders for you to action, to assist with your sight loss.



£2,000

towards an eye care tool for triage and support

WORLD JEWISH RELIEF

World Jewish Relief are the British Jewish community's international humanitarian agency. The Charity seeks to empower people in poverty to live with dignity, self-reliance and hope.

There remain an estimated 30,000 older Jewish people in Ukraine who live in a chronic state of vulnerability, and heavily impacted by the war. In spite of the difficult situation they were able to provide 202 participants with glasses and enable 63 people to have cataract surgeries. These interventions will ensure participants remain independent for longer, and improve their physical, emotional and mental health, at a time that is truly terrifying for them.

£2,000

towards delivering eye care
in Ukraine & Moldova



“This help restored my faith that someone can make a miracle in this terrible and difficult time! My family and I are very grateful to you for not abandoning us in our trouble.” - Volodymyr



£2,500

towards health education
and training

WORLD SIGHT FOUNDATION

The World Sight Foundation is a registered charity formed in 2012 with the objective of helping eye education in the developing world. In 2022 and in 2023 they provided education in Tanzania, Lesotho, Taiwan and Bangladesh and India. These courses have been very well received with over 400 attendees.

The foundation concentrates on education for primary eye care as teaching this cadre of professional allows for make maximum impact. In some places primary eye care is delivered by personnel other than doctors (for example ophthalmic nurses, ophthalmic clinical officers, or optometrists). Many of these people receive very little in the way of postgraduate education. The ambition is to improve standards of this cadre for the benefit of those that they serve – usually the poorest and neediest.



£5,000

for gene therapy research

RESEARCH: RETINA UK

Retina UK is the only charity dedicated to supporting people living with inherited retinal diseases, and to funding pioneering medical research that could make their challenges a thing of the past.

The project funded by the Spectacle Makers' Charity is for research into gene therapies, aiming to develop a treatment that could restore retinal function. Led by Professor Majlinda Lako, it will assess the impact of gene therapy on levels of a protein responsible for retinitis pigmentosa. This is a three-year project, which commenced in July 2022. Much of the first year of the project was focussed on developing a new viral vector (the tool that will be used to deliver the gene therapy into retinal cells), and optimising the dosage amounts for the therapy.



RESEARCH: JDRF UK

The research team, led by Dr Helen Colhoun aimed to harness advances in artificial intelligence to predict and potentially prevent future retinopathy and other complications related to type 1 diabetes. They procured over 4 million retinal images from the Scottish Diabetic Retinopathy screening programme and the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research (DRCR) Network.

With all the datasets in place, the team was able to develop and validate the prediction algorithm using deep learning. Their testing showed that using retinal images can help predict the risk of diabetic retinopathy more effectively than current methods. They were also able to establish that the algorithm can identify those who might develop diabetic retinopathy between screening intervals, as well as those at risk from cardiovascular disease and kidney disease.

BURSARY AWARDS

In the last 7 years, we have supported 114 young people (18 in 2022/23) embark on training as orthoptists, dispensing opticians & optometrists. The scheme is competitive and students must be enrolled and participating fully in a recognised course at Level 4 or above in the UK, intended to lead directly to a career in eye health.

“Through receiving the bursary, it has enabled me to focus on key items to help with my studies and separate this money from the every-day family bills and expenses. It has been really useful and taken a little pressure off.

The iPad has enabled me to carry a portable lightweight device to access all my notes and learning in one place and I am able to annotate an electronic copy in classes. It has really streamlined my learning and helped me use my on-campus time more effectively.”

Katie Golding, BSc (Hons) Orthoptics



£18,000

towards 18 bursaries for early career professionals in training



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Three ophthalmic professionals were supported to travel to conferences and present their work:

- Dr Michael Gilhooley's and Dr Akshay Narayan's travel to the American Association for Paediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus (AAPOS) annual meeting in New York, USA.
 - Dr Gilhooley presented on research into genetic testing for Infantile Nystagmus syndrome
 - Dr Narayan presented on research into post-operative outcomes in patients undergoing exotropia surgery
- Dr Tejal Magan's travel to the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) conference in New Orleans, USA. There she presented on preliminary results of the UK Glaucoma BioResource (pictured above).



THANK YOU

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We are registered charity in England and Wales number 1186122.