

RNIB Corporate Newsletter 2014



supporting blind and
partially sighted people

Chief Executive Briefing

Looking back over the last 12 months at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) I am proud of all that we have achieved.



In March we launched Spot the signs, our campaign urging over 50s to take action to protect their sight. More than 330,000 people visited our website rnibspotthesigns.org.uk and research revealed that the campaign prompted one in five people to book an eye test.

The second biannual Volunteering Impact Survey published in June identified that our volunteers contribute a staggering £6.7million per year in equivalent value to the RNIB Group, a 12 per cent rise since 2011. The value our volunteers make cannot be underestimated, not just in terms of monetary value, but in terms of reach and the services they offer to blind and partially sighted people.

In November, we held our third Switch on to technology month, helping people to get started with technology and learn about products and software that can enhance their lives. Our popular technology taster events were fully booked and we also offered online video tutorials, a Switch on newsletter and accessible technology guides.

Looking ahead to April, we will launch the RNIB Group Strategy for 2014–19. It was really important for us that the strategy was designed in consultation with blind and partially sighted people, so we asked them, their family and friends, where we should focus our efforts.

Time and time again people told us that they had wished someone, RNIB, anyone, had been there for them when they were first told they were losing their sight. So, by 2019, we aim to develop an eye clinic service covering every eye clinic in the UK, in collaboration with other agencies, local societies and volunteers.

We've been focussing on three strategic priorities to date; Independence, Inclusion and Prevention and as of April 2014 we will include a fourth priority, "Being there". This will help us achieve our ambition of "Making every day better for everyone affected by sight loss".

The work we need to do to achieve our strategic commitment would not be possible without the fantastic generosity of our supporters, thank you for all that you do to help us achieve our goals.

Lesley-Anne Alexander

Lesley-Anne Alexander CBE
RNIB Chief Executive

Vision UK 2014

Vision UK 2014, the leading eye health and sight loss sector conference, will be held on Thursday 12 June, 2014 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London.

Vision UK is the only annual eye health and sight loss conference for the whole of the sight loss sector. It brings together health and social care professionals, members of health and eye care organisations and representatives from the voluntary sector. The event, which attracts over 500 delegates, is organised by the UK Vision Strategy team which is a VISION 2020 UK initiative led by RNIB.

This year, the theme for the conference is “Turning strategy into action” and will review the progress that has been made in implementing the UK Vision Strategy since it was launched in 2013.



The one-day conference will include a series of masterclasses where delegates will hear from experts in the public health and eye care sectors about a range of subjects, and will take away tools and ideas for implementing the Strategy locally. The programme also features a

Question Time panel where delegates will have the opportunity to challenge key leaders in the sector.

Anita Lightstone, Programme Director, UK Vision Strategy, said: **“After a successful conference in 2013 where we launched the UK Vision Strategy for 2013-2018, it will be great to bring the sector together again to share examples of best practice and to showcase the excellent work that has been taking place across the UK to turn the Strategy into a reality”.**

Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are available for the conference. If you are interested, please contact Carly Brunskill at carly.brunskill@rnib.org.uk or call 020 7391 2138.

Stop press

RNIB signed a global strategic partnership with Nokia at their Helsinki headquarters in January. The arrangement, initially for a period of twelve months, will see RNIB provide a range of accessibility consultancy support to enable Nokia to accelerate and deepen their deployment of increasingly accessible products and services for blind and partially sighted people. The organisations have had a longstanding relationship and this expanded commercial arrangement represents an important milestone for RNIB in its mission to help companies make their products available to people with sight loss.

Action for Blind People and Boots Opticians partnership success

The partnership between Boots Opticians and Action for Blind People, part of the RNIB Group, has now entered its fifth year and raised almost £200k in 2013, far exceeding the target of £150k.

The money raised supports Action's Actionnaires clubs, which run free sport, leisure and cultural activities for blind and partially sighted children, aged four to 16. The clubs help the children to make friends and build their confidence whilst giving them the opportunity to enjoy a range of fun activities such as football, archery, swimming, ten pin bowling, art and dance.

The Boots Opticians Actionnaires Athletics Day

The "Boots Opticians Actionnaires Athletics Day" took place in September and is the UK's biggest track and field event for blind and partially sighted children. Taking place at the prestigious English Institute of Sport in Sheffield, approximately 150 visually impaired children competed in a range of sports including long jump, sprint events and javelin.

The event was also supported by British Blind Sport and attended by the Paralympic talent

spotter from British Athletics who discovered three potential athletic stars of the future!

Among the athletes were three brothers from Sheffield; Coby (aged 7), Lucas (12) and Bailey Ashman (14) shown below.

Budding young sportsman Bailey said: **"I had a great time. Last year's Paralympic Games made me want to do even more sport. Making friends and doing new things is what I love about Actionnaires and this event is the highlight of the year."**

Richard Edwards, Professional Services Director, Boots Opticians, summed up why his company supports the event: **"Boots Opticians, in partnership with Topcon UK, were delighted to be involved in this fantastic event. The thrill of being involved in sport is one which many of us take for granted and being able to support Actionnaires to make that enjoyment accessible to their young members is a true privilege."**



Talking ATMs

Thanks to RNIB's Make Money Talk campaign, nearly all of the major banks in the UK are now introducing talking ATMs. This means that the country's ATM network is now much more accessible for many blind and partially sighted people who can now use a cash machine unassisted, often for the first time in their life.

The Co-operative Bank, Barclays, RBS, Natwest, Lloyds, Santander and HSBC have listened to their customers and have committed to our campaign.

Barclays was the first bank to sign up to Make Money Talk and 85 per cent of their ATMs already "talk". We've also worked closely with Barclays to make sure their customers know about the benefits of the new ATMs. Because of the initiative Barclays took on this campaign they were nominated for and won a Technology4Good Award sponsored by BT.

The Co-operative Bank were the first bank to make 100 per cent of their ATMs talk. They also introduced a high contrast large print option for their ATMs which has been really positively received. They even attended our

RNIB membership forums with a portable ATM so that our members could practise using it in a safe environment!

Make Money Talk – our success so far:

- Lloyds (TSB, Halifax, Sainsbury's and Bank of Scotland) successfully reached their target of getting 70 per cent of their ATMs talking by the end of last year.
- Nationwide has started their roll out and aims to have 75 per cent of their ATMs talking by March 2014.
- 25 per cent of Pay Point ATMs are already talking and all new ATMs have the capability.
- Santander started introducing talking ATMs in January 2014 and by the end of 2015 aim to have 50 per cent talking.
- HSBC are aiming for 75 per cent talking in 2014.
- RBS (NatWest, Tesco) plan to have 100 per cent talking by 2015.



Before the availability of talking ATMs, Suzie Simons had to rely on her 8-year-old son to withdraw money for her



L'Occitane and the Trainee Grade Scheme

RNIB helps unemployed visually impaired people into permanent sustainable employment. Thanks to L'Occitane's generous support, we have been able to offer 22-year-old Siobhan a new position in our Trainee Grade Scheme. The scheme provides trainees with paid employment for 50 weeks. It gives valuable work experience, on the job training and development and the support of a dedicated Employment Development Officer to help them into permanent employment once the placement has finished.

Siobhan has no peripheral vision and only light perception in her right eye. Before this placement, Siobhan struggled to find paid work and her confidence was affected by the lack of response from jobs she applied for. She was encouraged to seek unsuitable positions and was self-conscious about the symptoms of her eye condition, which includes eye

watering, when serving customers. Siobhan is excited about her new position with RNIB and very keen to learn.

"I am very grateful to L'Occitane and RNIB for providing the opportunity, for once I feel confident in myself and that I am actually doing something with my life that is worthwhile" Siobhan Payne

L'Occitane is continuing to support the Trainee Grade Scheme with a donation from the L'Occitane Foundation in addition to money raised by fun staff events such as cookery classes. L'Occitane will also be donating proceeds from the sale of their new tote bag throughout 2014.

For more information on how you can help fund the Trainee Grade Scheme please contact Emma Smith at emma.smith@rnib.org.uk

UPS swap their Browns for Neon at the RNIB Fun Run

October last year saw RNIB hold Glow Neon, a Full Moon Party themed fun run, with volunteers from UPS rolling up their sleeves to make sure the event ran smoothly.

Participants ran, walked or danced their way around the three kilometre circuit, wearing neon outfits and luminous paint. DJs played music along the route, adding to the party atmosphere. The UPS volunteer team ran stalls, led face and body painting and helped motivate all those taking part in the challenge.

Sharon Hampson, Supervisor, UPS commented: **“I think it is fair to say this was the most fun volunteer activity I have ever taken part in and my colleagues all agree that it was too!”**

A huge thank you to the UPS team for lending their invaluable support and helping make the event such a success!

The Glow Neon Fun Run was so successful that we are expanding to eight events this year across the UK.

To find out how your company can get involved in volunteering for RNIB please contact fundraising@rnib.org.uk





Read for RNIB Day

History was made in October as hundreds of members of the public were joined by celebrities and the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, to give children's literary classic *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* a "curiouser and curiouser" twist by narrating sections of the story to create a unique audio book.

RNIB invited people to visit a specially designed 'Wonderland' at Waterloo train station where they recorded a passage from this iconic story. The passages have been edited into a complete Talking Book, which will soon be available through our National Library Service, the largest library in the UK for people with sight loss.

"Nobody should be denied the right to read simply because they cannot see, and we're committed to making more books fully accessible for blind and partially sighted people. By supporting Read for RNIB Day, people can help RNIB to change the story."

Becca McRow, Campaign Manager Read for RNIB Day

Hundreds of events took place around the country for Read for RNIB Day including

read-aloud-athons, Mad Hatters' tea parties and literary lunches. The money raised will go towards RNIB's vital services supporting blind and partially sighted people.

As part of this year's Read for RNIB Day, RNIB teamed up with Morrisons supermarket, Walker Books and the Daily Express, to give away thousands of copies of Michael Rosen's much loved children's classic, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. Several Morrisons stores have since held fundraising activities for Read for RNIB Day including reading events and even 'live' bear hunts!

For more information on how you can get involved in this year's Read for RNIB day please visit readfornib.org.uk

Eye Clinic Liaison Officers

Being told you're going to lose your sight can be frightening and the changes you need to make can be very hard to come to terms with.

"The day that you're told you're going to be registered blind you're just left alone."
Gerard

Busy hospitals do not have the time to talk through how an eye condition may affect your life or what help you can get. At a time like this people often feel confused and don't know where to turn.

An Eye Clinic Liaison Officer can answer all your questions and take the time to listen, advise and help you see your future.

"It was the hardest thing I've ever done, and I don't think I would have made it without Sue's support every step of the way. Thanks to RNIB, I've been able to piece my life back together." Irene

Your support can help place an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer in more hospitals and clinics.

This could be the lifeline that helps people like Gerard to cope with the changes they're facing and get on with their lives.

You can help, right from the start.

- £80 can help someone like Irene when they have just been told that they could lose their sight.
- £340 could pay for two days of eye clinic support so people can ask the questions they need to understand their diagnosis better.
- £1,670 means that help is available for more than 20 people when they need it most.
- £6,700 can offer more than eight weeks of clinic support, helping over 80 people, to come to terms with their diagnosis.



Extending the Reach

RNIB's Extending the Reach programme carefully matches blind and partially sighted people to work placement vacancies based on their skills and experience.

By taking part in the scheme, employers can demonstrate their commitment to equality and gain confidence in employing people with sight loss whilst benefiting from a well skilled and experienced member of staff. All placements are for 21 hours per week, for a duration of 50 weeks and participants leave the placement with a brighter chance of securing long term employment.

In return for offering a placement to someone through the Extending the Reach programme, RNIB can:

- Provide you with free advice on supporting someone with sight loss, including a work-based assessment to identify adjustments and equipment that may be beneficial to the new employee.
- Help you access government grants that can cover the cost of equipment that an employee may need such as magnification software for their computer.
- Provide visual awareness training for your colleagues and staff to build confidence in working with someone with sight loss. (Government grants may be able to cover the cost of this training).

“I feel that I am now a part of the real world... I can hold my head up higher being a full-time employee and working for the money I spend” Robert, aged 26

For more information on how you can give someone with sight loss the chance to gain crucial skills in the workplace, please contact Emma Smith at emma.smith@rnib.org.uk



The Recycling Appeal

Did you know that 64 per cent of offices in the UK have surplus ink cartridges lying around their office or stockroom? This is often due to changes in suppliers or printing equipment resulting in new cartridges lying unused and no longer needed.

We can turn your unused cartridges into cash for RNIB!

Everyone knows it is good to be green, not only will your recycling benefit RNIB but it's good for your business too. Our partner, The Recycling Appeal, can provide you with all the relevant waste transfer documents that you need and will ensure that all goods are recycled in the best possible way.

As a zero landfill company, The Recycling Appeal is committed to providing you with the very best environmental, social and financial solution for your recyclable goods. They will ensure all items are reused, reduced or recycled in an environmentally friendly way.

Over the last seven years, an amazing £385,000 has been raised for RNIB from ink cartridge and mobile phone recycling –

a figure that would not have been achieved without RNIB supporters everywhere.

We keep track of how much your collections raise and provide regular updates, so you can demonstrate the impact of your recycling throughout your organisation. Taking part in the scheme is completely free and The Recycling Appeal will arrange regular free collections whenever you need them.

It is a simple way to raise funds for RNIB's work whilst also helping to protect the environment. It couldn't be easier to get involved!

You can request freepost RNIB envelopes or arrange for a free collection simply by calling The Recycling Appeal on 08451 30 20 10 or emailing rnib@recyclingappeal.com. Please visit rnib.org.uk/recycle for more information.



Become a corporate partner

The support of hundreds of organisations and their employees has enabled RNIB to make a positive impact on the lives of the almost two million people living with sight loss in the UK.

Creating a charity partnership is a fantastic way to engage employees and customers, increase motivation and encourage teamwork whilst having fun and helping us to achieve our goals.

Every single day 100 people start to lose their sight and in half of all these cases, this life changing event is avoidable.

People of all ages and backgrounds can be affected by sight loss at any time, and the number of people in the UK with sight loss is set to increase dramatically. It is predicted that by 2050 the number of people with sight loss in the UK will double to nearly four million.

By working in partnership with us, you will be helping us promote and support the independence and inclusion of blind and partially sighted people and to take positive steps to eliminating avoidable sight loss.



RNIB fundraising group trip



Fundraise for RNIB and raise vital funds



RNIB staff and volunteer awards



How your support funds our vital work

- RNIB spends £117million every year supporting blind and partially sighted people.
- Fundraising and donations account for 60 per cent of our income, which means that we need to raise £70million of voluntary income to ensure that we can carry out our vital work.
- 87p in every pound is spent on providing services for blind and partially sighted people. 12p is spent on generating new funds and 1p is spent on administration.

If you would like more information on becoming a corporate partner please contact Emma Smith, Senior Corporate Partnerships Executive on 020 7874 1334 or emma.smith@rnib.org.uk

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