



ANNUAL REVIEW 2019



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WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

I am very happy to present to you this annual review with highlights from the last year at Royal Blind. We are also looking ahead with many exciting plans and projects that I would like to share with you.

In late 2018 we proudly celebrated the 225th anniversary of Royal Blind. We are now in the process of developing a new organisational strategy with a proud ambition to grow our charity and develop new services for people with sight loss across Scotland. Fundraising will be a key priority as will strengthening our profile to ensure we can attract income, supporters and new service users as our charity grows and develops.

Over the last year we have invested in the development of a volunteering programme to work alongside our staff team and we are aiming for this to be an integral part of our future growth.

Having successfully become the provider of the vision impairment service for the entire local authority of East Lothian last year, we have built on this success and pupils with vision impairment in Orkney will soon be able to benefit from the expertise of Royal Blind School staff.

Our role in policy and influencing is continuing to grow. In October we launched our Vision for Equal Education campaign which highlighted

the need to provide more specialist support for pupils with vision impairment in Scotland's schools. We published a report that highlighted the fact that over the past eight years the number of blind and partially sighted pupils has more than doubled, while over the same period there have been reductions in specialist support. Eighty-five MSP's signed up to back the campaign at an exhibition we held in the Scottish Parliament. Politicians are keen to see our work in action and the Royal Blind School was delighted to receive a visit from the Scottish Parliament's Education and Skills Committee.

We continue to fund research into eye disease through the Ophthalmology Committee of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. This research has led to a highly successful research programme developing novel gene therapies for the treatment of previously incurable forms of blindness. We hope to fund more of this vital work in the future. Thank you to all our generous donors, volunteers and staff without whom this work would not be possible. We look forward to continuing to work closely with you as we develop our new strategy.

Gwenn McCreath
Chair



ABOUT ROYAL BLIND

Royal Blind is Scotland's largest vision impairment organisation. We create life changing opportunities for people of all ages living with sight loss. Our vision is for a community in which blind and partially sighted people, including those who have other disabilities, are fully included and able to lead fulfilling lives.

Our mission is to:

- Develop people's skills and resources for independent living
- Provide support and care to meet people's needs

- Support people to fulfil their ambitions
- Involve blind and partially sighted people as leaders, employees and supporters in shaping and improving the services they receive
- Provide written and spoken text in accessible formats
- Empower young people to become confident, successful learners, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- Improve and enrich education and care provision for children and young people with vision impairment across Scotland.





ROYAL BLIND THE ROYAL BLIND SCHOOL

The Royal Blind School is a national grant aided special school providing specialist education to children and young people with vision impairment, including those with complex needs.

We offer daytime and residential places, as well as full and part time education. For pupils with complex needs we can provide a service seven days a week and 52 weeks a year for full-time or respite care. We also run a pre-school playgroup.

In September 2018, Education Scotland carried out an inspection and awarded the school an 'Excellent' grade for learning, teaching and assessment and a grade of 'Very Good' for raising attainment and achievement.

The Care Inspectorate also awarded the school a 'Very Good' grade for the quality of care and support, and 'Very Good' for the quality of staffing.

We were delighted to be able to welcome the Scottish Parliament's Education and Skills Committee to the Royal Blind School in December 2018. MSPs saw first-hand the excellent support provided for pupils at the school.

The Royal Blind School is continuing to run the East Lothian Vision Impairment Service, supporting children and young people with vision impairment in schools and nurseries in East Lothian. Currently we are supporting more than 50 pupils in this area. The service is delivered by a team of experienced Royal Blind School teachers who work within mainstream schools to meet pupils' individual needs. We are looking forward to extending our vision impairment support service to Orkney in the coming year.

One of our pupils, Andrew Pettigrew, has received an offer to study English and Creative Writing at both Glasgow and Stirling Universities. Whilst another pupil has left the school and embarked upon a course at Edinburgh College to study music.



We were very proud of ex-pupil Harrison Lovett who began judo at the Royal Blind School and this year won a silver medal at the Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi. Harrison's mum said: "He would never have tried judo without the encouragement of staff at the Royal Blind School."

Pupils have also been getting a taste of what the world of work might hold by taking part in work experience. Pupils have taken up placements at the Scottish Poetry Library, RNIB, Teens Plus and the Tone Garden recording studio at Summerhall.

A new kitchen courtyard has been completed at the school. The project was made possible with over £100,000 being donated by the National Lottery Community Fund and the Morrison's Foundation alongside donations from individual and corporate supporters and other trusts.

The custom-built planters are wheelchair accessible. The garden provides an educational setting where pupils can learn to grow fruit and vegetables from 'plot to plate' with all produce being used in the Home Economics classes in the school.

ANDREW'S STORY

Andrew Pettigrew was 11 when he joined the Royal Blind School. He had his eyesight until the age of six when he developed Retinitis Pigmentosa. By the age of 10 he had lost his sight.

Josephine Pettigrew, Andrew's mum, said: "Andrew was in a mainstream school but his vision was changing every day, so that every day would feel like his first day at school. Every single day my stomach would be in knots worrying about how he would cope with his rapidly failing vision at school."

"When he started at the Royal Blind School, the difference was like night and day. I just thought, I am so grateful that he is there."

"The school knew how to look after him when he was losing his sight, they just took it all in their stride, and I knew that each day he was there he would be fine."

"It was a huge relief to me to know he was in the right place."

"He was able to take part in PE again. The PE lessons are tailored to individual children. They look at what the pupils can do, not what they can't."

Andrew is a talented writer and poet and his writing has thrived at the school. In 2016 he was one of just ten students in Scotland to win the prestigious Pushkin Prize creative writing award, which was presented to him by Scottish crime writer, Ian Rankin.

"As Andrew's sight failed he had to use his own imagination more. I think that's really what inspired him to want to become a writer, the Royal Blind School has given him the confidence that he can achieve his dreams."



ANYA'S STORY

Since 2017 the Royal Blind School has been providing the East Lothian Vision Impairment Service. Teachers from the Royal Blind School visit pupils with vision impairment in mainstream schools across East Lothian.

These regular visits mean they are able to offer vital support and skills, such as teaching braille, helping to adapt areas in the classroom and working with both the pupil and their teacher. Anya, age 9, began to receive support from the service a year ago.

Anya's mum Emma, said: "Anya was born at 23 weeks. She had a brain haemorrhage when she was two days old, she contracted pneumonia two months later and she had to have laser surgery on the blood vessels in her eyes. Doctors said she may never walk or talk. I don't know how we got through those months, we barely left her side."

"Anya finally left hospital when she was five months old, she is such a fighter, she did learn to walk and talk. As she got bigger we realised that she was struggling with her vision. We saw an eye specialist who referred us to the East Lothian Visual Impairment Service. I couldn't believe how quickly it all happened, it was such a lifeline."

Pam, a teacher from the Royal Blind School, came to see Anya in her school and immediately managed to make a lot of changes. Pam worked with Anya's teacher to change the position she sat in, she moved her further from the window to reduce the glare and she

made sure that she had text enlarged. Pam also got Anya using a laptop with a microphone so she can type.

Emma said: "Anya is finding it much easier to concentrate and the change in her is just amazing to watch. She didn't have many friends when she started school but her increasing confidence has meant she now feels able to make friends."

"Anya is like a different person, she's such a chatterbox now. The visits from Royal Blind have made her come on in leaps and bounds."





Staff, family and friends celebrating ex-pupil Harrison Lovett's Olympic Silver medal at the opening of the courtyard garden at the Royal Blind School.



 ROYAL BLIND
LEARNING HUB

The Royal Blind Learning Hub is a national resource centre supporting staff in mainstream schools who work with pupils with vision impairment. It provides outreach to staff and pupils, free training and online learning.

We offer support through visiting schools directly to provide one to one contact with pupils, providing teacher and support staff training through our seminars, and supplying online learning services for school staff through our website.

The Learning Hub is a valued resource for professionals working in the field of vision impairment across Scotland and beyond.

This year delegates have travelled from as far as America, Pakistan and Tasmania to attend our seminars and learn from the expertise of Royal Blind School teachers.

The courses we provide include adapting lessons for children with a vision impairment like maths, science, art, music, teaching braille and independent living skills to pupils with sight loss.

One of our most popular courses is our communication and on-body signing training. This enables education staff to communicate with children who have vision impairment and complex needs. We have filmed 'how to' videos for 80 of the on-body signs, which can be found on the Learning Hub website www.royalblind.org/learninghub

Our course on how to adapt maths and science exam papers to make them accessible for pupils with a vision impairment has proved to be an invaluable support for teachers in mainstream schools.

A series of free seminars that were held in Perth, Glasgow and Edinburgh were attended by a total of 153 education professionals.

.....
"The maths and science exam course was so informative, and gave me confidence on tackling new problems"
.....



ROYAL BLIND KIDSCENE

Kidscene is an after school and holiday club that looks after children with and without disabilities between the ages of five and 16 in an integrated environment. We particularly welcome children with vision impairment and those with additional support needs.

Kidscene was inspected by the Care Inspectorate in February 2019 and was graded as 'Very Good' for the quality of care and support and the quality of staffing.

Highlights this year have included a visit from Urban Nature Retreat with some of their amazing animals, a trip to North Berwick beach and a visit from Infinity Robotics, a company who encourage children to become interested in graphic design and engineering.

The service is hugely appreciated by parents and feedback continues to be positive. Kidscene is special because of the way it enables children with and without disabilities to spend time together.

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"I like to come to Kidscene because it is inclusive, I can play with my sister who is disabled, and we can both make new friends"
.....

.....
"Staff are fantastic; they always have time to talk, listen and help"
.....

.....
"Staff always make themselves available and are great at passing on information about how my child's day has gone. I have always felt that they genuinely care about my daughter and her wellbeing, which is very reassuring."
.....





ROYAL BLIND
ADULT SERVICES

Our Adult Services provide 24-hour care and support for young adults who have vision impairment and additional needs including cognitive and communication impairments. We currently have two residential services in Edinburgh – Forward Vision and Allermuir.

Forward Vision is located on the same campus as the Royal Blind School and accommodates 12 adults on a full time basis with an additional two beds available for short breaks. Allermuir is a permanent home for four adults nestled within the community in the Inch, Edinburgh.

Allermuir received a grade of 'Very Good' for its environment from the Care Inspectorate in December 2018 and a grade of 'Good' for the quality of care and support.

Forward Vision was set up because we found there was a lack of places for young disabled adults to go when they left school. We recognise that some young adults with disabilities will need ongoing support and are not able to live alone. Our service provides a supportive environment for young people.

We encourage greater independent living skills so that young adults are able to make choices in their daily life and in the running of their home.

Staff at Forward Vision encourage residents to take part in everyday activities like shopping for things for tea or going to the hairdresser.

There is also a regular programme of trips and activities. This year the young adults have been ice-skating where they can use a special chair on the ice. There have also been bowling trips, outings to the cinema, and a music festival.

This year staff organised a ceilidh for residents, families and friends at the Prestonfield Golf Club in Edinburgh.

Residents and staff also attended shows at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

All of the residents are able to have regular sessions in the hydrotherapy pool within the Royal Blind School.





ROYAL BLIND CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

We run Scotland's only specialist care homes for older people with sight loss, Braeside House in Edinburgh and Jenny's Well in Paisley.

Jenny's Well has been open for 18 months and has operated at 90.3% capacity this year. It has become firmly established at the heart of the local community.

Staff have this year created innovative spaces for residents including Jenny's Bar, a space within the care home which provides an opportunity for residents to relax and socialise outside of a regular sitting room. Work is almost complete on a relaxation room and a memory room.

This year we received a grant of £20,000 from the Life Changes Trust with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, to research what activities residents with a vision impairment and dementia find most rewarding. This is a two-year project and we aim to provide a helpful guide for use by ourselves and other care providers.

Both Jenny's Well and Braeside House have been inspected under the new Health Care Standards with both care homes receiving an overall 'Good.'

There is a busy social calendar in both homes. With the increase in our activity teams, the residents have been able to enjoy a much more varied programme. Residents have enjoyed barge trips, walking groups and concerts as well as visits from local primary school and nursery children to enable different generations to socialise together.

We are using Alexa, iPads and a new Touch Table at Braeside House which operates like a giant iPad and amongst other things can be used to take residents on a trip to places from their past via Google Earth.

Activities staff at Braeside House have been successfully holding art sessions with residents, which have proved hugely popular. The standard of the work being produced has been so high that an exhibition for family and friends is being planned.



TONY'S STORY

Tony is a Meaningful Activities Co-ordinator at Braeside House, one of our care homes for older people with sight loss. Tony's job is to work with a team to deliver a whole range of activities within the home. Activities are wide-ranging and include barge trips, art classes, singing, quizzes and baking.

"I've been at Braeside House for over a year.

"I love caring for people. I spent most of my life working in retail then I became a cook in a care home. But I discovered that I really liked spending time with the residents and thinking up activities which led me to becoming a Meaningful Activities Co-ordinator at Braeside House.

"I really like to see what the residents need. I start off by asking them what did they like to do before they came to Braeside House. That gives me something to build on.

"I have recently started up a walking group. It's been brilliant, not just for the exercise, but also for encouraging people to be sociable. We go around and knock on doors to see if residents want to join our walking talking group. It doesn't matter if someone is in a wheelchair. Everyone is welcome.

"I've also started an art group. We are encouraging residents to paint and make sculptures. The work they have produced is so good we are planning an exhibition for family and friends.

"It makes my day when a resident is happy and stimulated by the activities we are creating."



JAMES'S STORY

James, aged 86, joined Jenny's Well in January. He lost his sight after suffering an injury playing rugby when he was 19.

He said: "I moved into Jenny's Well in January and it's been a big adjustment for me after living on my own. One of the things that has made it easier is the excellent quality of the food. Since I lost my sight, I have always taken great pleasure in food. My wife was a good cook and I really missed her food when she died.

"The chef here, Margaret makes the most amazing Banoffee pie. We have three courses for lunch and dinner and a really good breakfast, and Margaret always makes time for a chat."

James, who grew up in Govan, Glasgow, lost his sight when he was 19 after being injured in a rugby scrum. He suffered two detached retinas. The shock of sudden blindness meant he was not able to pursue a career as a lawyer despite having studied law at university.

Showing great determination, James learnt braille and went on to become a social worker and a Sheriff. He married and had two children.

James wrote a note in braille to Chef Margaret to thank her for the lovely food. High praise indeed for the kitchen at Jenny's Well.



INA'S STORY

A former Private in the Army, Ina, aged 95, has always been independent. During the Second World War she worked to repair tanks, before going on to raise a family of five with her husband Jim.

But after several falls in the past few years, Ina, who has dementia and very little sight as a result of macular degeneration, was left feeling more and more reliant on her family.

In 2018 Ina became unwell and was hospitalised for several months. Worried about her safety, Ina and her family took the decision to find specialist care and support to help Ina feel more secure. Jenny's Well was chosen for its proximity to family members and its team of nurses and care assistants who are specialists in sight loss and dementia care.

Ina's daughter, Pam Franklin, said: "There was no question that Jenny's Well was the best place for my mum. It's a beautiful building and a warm and welcoming home. Families are encouraged to drop in and visit whenever they want to. Sight loss is a difficult thing to cope with but the staff are specially trained in how to care for people who are blind or partially sighted."

When Ina first arrived at Jenny's Well she relied on a wheelchair and a member of staff at the home. But after encouragement from the staff, Ina is now able to walk to the living and dining areas. She has regained her independence and is more relaxed and content, safe in the knowledge that help is on hand.

Pam said: "It's great to see her looking healthier and happier. Giving my mum her independence back is an amazing gift. She knows she can request help if she needs it but she doesn't have to ask for help all the time. If she's feeling sociable, there are other residents and staff to chat to, but she can spend time on her own if she wants. It's a great comfort for the family that we know she's safe and happy."

Ina added: "Jenny's Well is a wonderful home that has helped me gain independence back. The staff are excellent and very helpful. One of the best things is that there is always something going on. Sometimes there is a walking group, or we will go out to a local pub or café. I don't think there's a single thing you could do to improve it."





●● ROYAL BLIND
●● SCOTTISH BRAILLE PRESS

The Scottish Braille Press supplies braille, large print and audio transcription to a wide range of commercial customers and individuals, enabling access for vision impaired people to mainstream services such as banking and education.

Scottish Braille Press sales grew in cash terms on the previous year, achieving a total income of £3.36 million, although the Press had to make some adaptations to remain competitive due to continuing cost pressures in a very competitive and technological market.

The biggest demand was again for large print, which accounts for 84% of our total sales, with braille accounting for 8.3% and audio 7.7%.

We have completed our first year in our new building at Robertson Avenue in Edinburgh. The new building provides a modern, comfortable working environment.

In September 2018 we achieved ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certification. The ISO 9001 international standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the process approach and continual improvement. ISO 14001 is the international standard that specifies requirements for an effective environmental management system. These now sit alongside our ISO 27001 Information Security Management standard, Cyber Essentials and Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) compliance and further demonstrate our commitment to quality and data security.

We are delighted to have achieved these accreditations and they further demonstrate our ability and commitment to consistently provide products and services that meet not only our own regulatory requirements but those of our clients as well.

Around half of the staff employed by the Scottish Braille Press have a disability.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

The aim of our Marketing, Communications and Fundraising activity is to communicate with stakeholders, the public and donors in order to build relationships, attract and retain service users and raise funds for Royal Blind.

In 2018, we were proud to celebrate our 225th anniversary, which created an excellent opportunity to highlight the work the charity has been doing on behalf of people with visual impairment since 1793. To mark the anniversary, we held a reception for supporters, staff and service users at the Scottish Parliament, hosted by Stuart McMillan MSP. The reception was the best attended event in the Scottish Parliament's Garden Lobby since the Parliament was established.

We were grateful to receive 32 grants this year, totalling £124,672 from charitable trusts and foundations. We were especially grateful to the National Lottery Community Fund and Morrison's Foundation, along with other generous funders who supported us in our school courtyard redevelopment project, which raised over £100,000. We also received generous donations from corporate supporters and individuals.

We developed a new advertising campaign to increase the number of residents at Braeside House. This included a door drop

leaflet to 47,000 homes and a three-month bus advertising campaign on routes close to the house. Jenny's Well in Paisley was also supported with advertising to help further promote this as a new service. The campaign built on the strong awareness created by the First Minister's visit earlier in the year.

Our website and social media channels play an increasingly important role in promoting our services and awareness of vision impairment in Scotland. In total, we had over half a million unique users to the website, Facebook has a yearly reach of over 360,000 and Twitter over 600,000.

We launched a new campaign, Our Vision for Equal Education, to highlight the need for increased support for blind and partially sighted pupils in Scotland's schools. We promoted our campaign at the Scottish Parliament, with 83 MSPs pledging to support the campaign. The campaign received extensive media coverage and the Royal Blind School received a visit from the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee.

We also launched a new report highlighting the links between sight loss and loneliness in collaboration with our sister charity Scottish War Blinded. The research was referenced in the Scottish Government's strategy document aimed at tackling social isolation.





RESEARCH

Royal Blind continued our long-standing commitment to research into eye disease by donating crucial funding through the Ophthalmology Research Committee of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

The funding that Royal Blind provides supports fundamental research in eye disease as well as clinical research.

Through the support of Royal Blind, it has been possible to develop a new technique of gene therapy which may stop degeneration of the retina. The new technique involves putting normal copies of the affected gene back into the cells of the retina to help them to function normally.

Royal Blind is also helping to support gene therapy research into Stargardt's disease. The phase 3 clinical trial is the largest gene therapy trial in the world to date.

The development of gene therapies for the treatment of blindness is ground-breaking and Royal Blind is proud to be associated with developments in this field.

Recent Royal Blind supported research into improving diabetic eye disease through insulin pump therapy has led to NHS Lothian offering retinal eye screening at the commencement of treatment. This change allows doctors to intervene with therapy, which might save eyesight at a much earlier stage.

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“This research has led us to modify our practice in NHS Lothian, people now have retinal eye screening on commencement of their insulin pump therapy and again at three months and then as is clinically indicated.”

.....
Dr Shareen Forbes, University of Edinburgh.
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PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Royal Blind has successfully provided a range of services to vision impaired people for over 225 years. Over the last dozen years we have established a number of new services – Forward Vision, Allermuir, Kidscene, the Learning Hub and Jenny’s Well. We are currently developing a new organisational strategy that will determine our future plans for service provision. We have engaged in market research to seek a wide range of views about our existing work and to help identify gaps for potential services in future.

We have plans to further extend our support for pupils with vision impairment in mainstream schools and to support the mainstream education staff who work with them, building on the work we are currently doing.

There are currently 171,000 people living with sight loss across Scotland and this figure is set to double with an ageing population. We have set ourselves a new ambition to reach many more of those people through the development of new Scotland-wide services.

We have ambitions to significantly grow our fundraising, as well as looking at cost savings and efficiencies in the way our current services are run. We will be working on strengthening our profile and brand to ensure that people

that require our services know what we can offer them, and to maximise our fundraising.

People are at the heart of what we do. We could not deliver a high standard of service provision without experienced, qualified and trained staff that are required for the delivery of our work. Over the last year we have invested in the development of a volunteering programme to work alongside our staff team. We are aiming for this to be an integral part of our future growth in services.

We are investing in learning and development and will be implementing a new online learning system for our staff to be able to access a wide range of resources to further their personal and professional development.

Safeguarding will continue to be of the utmost importance across all of our services and we will ensure that this has a high and fully-transparent profile at Board and all-staff level. We will ensure a strong leadership priority towards the development of consistent and best-practice approaches. We will manage risk in this area and facilitate a constructive learning culture where good practice can be shared across all of our services as part of a continuous improvement approach.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Total income, at £18.2 million, increased by £2.5 million from the previous year's figure.

Income from school fees increased by 7% due to an increase in the number of residential pupils. The contract with East Lothian Council to provide the East Lothian Visual Impairment Service in their schools yielded an income of £114,000 in 2018/19.

Income to adult services increased by £146,000 (5%) and income to the Scottish Braille Press increased by £63,000 (2%) due to rent received from the two tenants in their building.

Income from legacies at £750,000 was higher than last year thanks to the generosity of those who left a gift in their will. Investment income increased by £49,000 during 2018/19.

The net operating deficit of £1,866,000 for the Royal Blind School includes £198,000 net expenditure of the Royal Blind Learning Hub (2018, £179,000). The school's expenditure includes depreciation charges resulting from past capital expenditure that was funded from resources we already had, with no expectation of recovering those costs from future operations.

Disregarding depreciation the deficit of the school excluding the Learning Hub was £723,000 (2018 £625,000), an increase of £98,000.

Of the deficit of £53,000 in operating Kidscene, £21,000 was used as a bursary fund to allow children with complex support needs to attend the club.

Within older people's services, the deficit at Braeside House increased during 2018/19 due to the high proportion of Local Authority funded residents in the care home.

Jenny's Well had its first full operational year in 2018/19 and ran at a deficit as expected.

Net expenditure before investment gains of £2,962,000 is higher than we expected due to the continued budget deficit at Jenny's Well, Braeside House and the Royal Blind School, along with lower than budgeted income from dividends.

Our investments gained value by £643,000 which was slightly down from the 2017/18 figure.

The defined benefit pension fund gave a total actuarial loss of £292,000 so that a deficit of £7.8 million is now reported on the balance sheet. A planned valuation exercise will report in 2019/20.

Overall, the result is a net reduction in funds of £2.6 million. We continue to seek new areas of funding to develop our existing services in order to maximise income. Additionally, we are actively looking at ways to reduce costs.

For a more detailed narrative of our accounts please refer to our Audited Accounts on our website.



RESERVES

For over 225 years, Royal Blind has built up a reputation for exceptional care for people with sight loss, many of whom have additional disabilities and complex needs.

Due to the complex nature of the care we provide, we understand the need to hold a certain level of reserves to ensure that the essential continuity of care needed is not disrupted.

Our services include two care homes for older people with sight loss, the majority of whom also have dementia. We also run residential care services for younger adults with complex needs and for pupils attending the Royal Blind School, which also has non-residential pupils. Some of our residential pupils have 52-week placements due to the complexity of the care that they require as well as their medical needs.

For those in long term residential care, the service is their home and the people caring for them provide stability and security as well as high quality care, personalised support and compassion.

We believe that any disruption in care provision, including relocation to another service, would significantly impact upon the wellbeing and health of our service users. Our Board of Trustees therefore wish to ensure that we can continue to deliver our services, despite any event or circumstance that may impact upon our reputation and our ability to raise funds.

Our total reserves at the end of the 2018/19 financial year stand at £48.2 million. This is set out as follows:

Fixed Assets	£31,787,000
Restricted reserves	£655,000
Unrestricted reserves	£15,758,000
Total	£48,200,000

Our unrestricted reserve is effectively our 'free reserves', i.e. money that we can spend on providing services to those with a visual impairment. Our expenditure for the year ending March 2019 was £21.2 million, so our free reserves equate to about nine months running costs.

Currently the cost of running our services is significantly greater than the income that we receive. In the financial year 2018/19 our income was £18.2 million and our expenditure was £21.2 million, with the shortfall being covered from our reserves and unrealised investment gains. In 2019/20, this shortfall is projected to be £3.1 million.

Our reserves in investments, after deduction of pension reserve, can be realised when required, and will help with the charity's plans to develop new services to people with sight loss across Scotland, until a point when they can become sustainable through fundraising. Sight loss is projected to double in the next few decades, primarily due to the ageing population. Our Trustees recognise that we need to invest in order to develop new services and to have the ability to be able to fundraise for that service growth. Our reserves enable us to confidently do both ensuring that in doing so we are not risking our existing services or our donors' funds.

We also hold tangible fixed assets that would take time to release. These assets include buildings and estates that house our services so releasing may result in a loss or interruption of service delivery and business continuity. The remaining reserves total is restricted in purpose and referred to as Restricted Reserves.



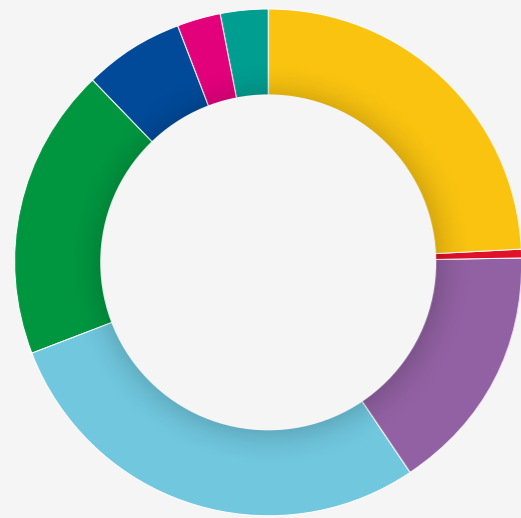
Statement of Financial Activities For the Year Ended 31 Mar 2019

	2019 £000	2018 £000	Increase (Decrease)
<i>Income from our activities:</i>			
Royal Blind School	4,412	4,192	5%
Kidscene	107	113	(5%)
Adult Services	2,930	2,784	5%
Older Peoples Services	5,204	3,531	47%
Scottish Braille Press	3,360	3,297	2%
<i>Income from other sources:</i>			
Donations and legacies	1,198	877	37%
Investment income	479	430	11%
Other	531	507	5%
Total income	18,221	15,731	16%
<i>Expenditure on our activities:</i>			
Royal Blind School	6,278	5,976	5%
Kidscene	160	145	10%
Adult Services	2,971	2,765	7%
Older Peoples Services	6,581	4,660	41%
Scottish Braille Press	3,249	3,093	5%
Grants, service development and sundry	1,005	223	351%
Marketing, Policy and Fundraising	411	347	18%
Other	528	458	15%
Total expenditure	21,183	17,667	20%
Net expenditure before investment gains	(2,962)	(1,936)	
Investments gains/(losses)	643	721	
Actuarial loss on pension scheme	(292)	1598	
Net movement in funds	(2,611)	383	

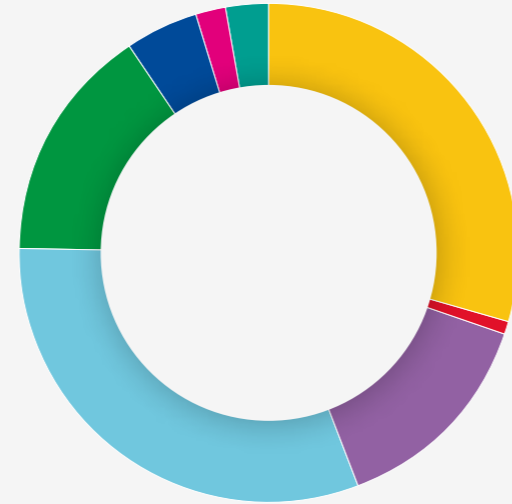
Summarised Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2019

	2019 £000	2018 £000	Increase (Decrease)
Tangible fixed assets	31,787	32,737	(3%)
Investments	22,007	23,215	(5%)
	53,794	55,952	(4%)
<i>Current Assets:</i>			
Stocks	50	45	11%
Debtors	2,205	1,640	34%
Cash at Bank and in Hand	990	1,470	(33%)
	3,245	3,155	3%
Current Liabilities	(1,032)	(1,073)	(4%)
Net Current Assets	2,213	2,082	6%
Net Assets excluding pension liability	56,007	58,034	(3%)
Pension liability	(7,775)	(7,191)	8%
Net Assets including pension liability	48,232	50,843	(5%)
<i>Represented by:</i>			
General Unrestricted Funds	47,577	50,235	(5%)
Restricted Funds	655	608	8%
Total funds	48,232	50,843	(5%)

Income



Expenditure



Royal Blind School: 24.2%	Royal Blind School: 29.6%
Kidscene: 0.6%	Kidscene: 0.8%
Adult Services: 16.0%	Adult Services: 14.0%
Older People's Services: 28.6%	Older People's Services: 31.1%
Scottish Braille Press: 18.4%	Scottish Braille Press: 15.3%
Donations & Legacies: 6.6%	Grants, services development & sundry: 4.7%
Investment Income: 2.6%	Marketing, Policy & Fundraising: 1.9%
Other: 3.0%	Other: 2.6%

Patron

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, K.G., G.C.V.O.

President

His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.B.E.

Vice President

The Hon. Mrs Janet Buchanan-Smith, C.B.E.

Principal Office

50 Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4JB

Board of Directors, Elected by Contributors

Gwenn McCreath (Chair)
 Kate Cherry (Vice-Chair)
 David Johnston (Vice Chair) (resigned 5th December 2018)
 Michael Craig
 Jamie Cuthbertson
 Patsy Gillies

James Law (resigned 5th December 2018)
 J Grant Macrae (resigned 5th December 2018)
 Michelle McWilliams
 Michael Martin
 Aidan McCorry (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Graeme Bold (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Jay Hogarty (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Ian McGregor (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Stephanie Phillips (appointed 5th December 2018)

Board of Directors, Elected by Public Bodies

Mike Boorman – Edinburgh Merchant Company, (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Professor Baljean Dhillon – University of Edinburgh (appointed 5th December 2018)
 Councillor Derek Howie – City of Edinburgh Council
 Dawn Burrows – Edinburgh Merchant (resigned 10th October 2018)
 Robert Mooney – Scottish Trade Union Congress
 James Milhench – Scottish Council of the National League of the Blind and Disabled

Auditor

BDO LLP, Citypoint, 65 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HD

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland, 142-144 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4EQ

Solicitors

Thorntons, Citypoint, 3rd Floor, 65 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HD

Investment Advisers

Barnett Waddingham LLP, 163 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2JJ

Chief Executive and Secretary

Mark O'Donnell



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LEARNING HUB

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KIDSCENE

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