

**Vision North Somerset**  
**(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**For the Year ended 31 March 2023**

**Charity Registered in England and Wales Number: 1165364**

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## **Trustees**

J Brice  
D Burden  
K Govind  
M Mackle (Chair)  
H Morgan

## **Chief Executive**

L Williams

**Principal Office and Registered Office** 3 Neva Road  
Weston Super Mare  
Somerset  
BS23 1YD

## **Bankers**

Unity Trust Bank  
9 Brindley Place  
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Birmingham  
B1 2HB

## **Independent Examiner**

Michelle Ferris BSc (Hons) FCA  
DChA  
Albert Goodman LLP  
Goodwood House  
Blackbrook Park Avenue  
Taunton  
Somerset  
TA1 2PX

## Welcome

Welcome to Vision North Somerset's Annual Report in a year which has seen great changes for our Charity. As we came out of Covid restrictions, we saw an enormous increase in the number of referrals to our services as the NHS returned to running clinics which had been suspended. We are very proud that during the pandemic, when we were not able to provide our usual range of services and locations, we made doorstep visits where possible. We ensured that every one of our 1500 service users, many of whom were struggling with isolation, received regular contact from us to provide reassurance that we were always available to help them in any way possible.

We started the year in 2022 by welcoming a new Chief Executive. Over the last twelve months we have reviewed and developed our way of delivering services and bedded in a new structure to take us forward where, in addition to our rehabilitation, registration and information services, we have restructured and extended our befriending, peer support and digital learning services. These are all vital to provide inclusion and give confidence to our service users.

We are very proud that we retain the grant to provide the services which North Somerset Council is required to provide for sight and hearing-impaired people in North Somerset. Apart from this grant we are entirely reliant on charitable donations to provide our services. We are very grateful to the generous trusts and individual donors who support our work; without them we would not be able to provide the vital services to support the people with sensory impairment in North Somerset.

The wider economic climate is, and will continue to be, challenging and fundraising is a concern for us, as it is for all in the charity sector. Despite the challenges, we go forward with optimism knowing we have a superb staff team, supported by our generous volunteers, who are determined to deliver the very best care and support for all our visually impaired and hard of hearing service users.

Marie Mackle – Chair of Trustees  
[trustees@visionns.org.uk](mailto:trustees@visionns.org.uk)

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the Charity for the Year ended 31 March 2023. The provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice “Accounting and Reporting by Charities” (SORP FRS 102 – implemented 1 January 2019) have been adopted in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the Charity.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

Vision North Somerset is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission in February 2016. The Charity was set up to replace Woodspring Association for Blind People, an unincorporated Charity registration number 270331.

This report covers the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Vision North Somerset is governed by a constitution, which allows for between 4 and 12 Trustees. Decisions are made by a majority vote of Trustees present at committee meetings. Trustees are elected at the AGM by members present. Nominations are sought prior to the meeting from sighted and visually impaired members. People with sensory loss are encouraged to serve as Trustees and make an important contribution to our board; at present we have two Trustees who are sight impaired. Officers of the Committee are elected from amongst themselves at the first meeting following the AGM. The Committee has the power to appoint to fill occasional vacancies and anyone so appointed would have full voting rights and hold office until the next AGM, where they are eligible for election.

All Trustees are volunteers and as such benefit from the support of the Vision North Somerset Volunteer Policy, including induction and visual impairment awareness training. External training opportunities are accessed where appropriate.

The Trustees who served during the period and since the period end are:

J Brice

D Burden (appointed December 2022 & resigned August 2023)

K Govind

M Mackle (Chair)

H Morgan

J Campbell (resigned April 2022)

S Pinnock (resigned April 2022)

As at the year end, the Charity had five trustees, which meets the constitution requirements. After a recruitment drive, two further trustees were recruited in 2023.

All Trustees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to compliance and policy making. Policies, risk management and compliance are regularly reviewed at Trustee meetings and between meetings via email as needed.

Day-to-day management of the organisation is the responsibility of the Chief Executive. Regular reports are made to the Trustees to ensure they are up to date with operational activities. Trustees are responsible for the overall management of the Charity. Where needed, Sub Committees are set up to explore specific issues in depth, reporting to the Trustee board to facilitate informed decision making.

## **Risk Management**

Vision North Somerset has policies and procedures in place to assist with the operation of the Charity; these include Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Volunteer Policy, Disciplinary, Grievance, Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. Policies are reviewed on a regular schedule.

Vision North Somerset maintains and regularly reviews a risk register to support the management of significant risks. Mitigating actions to avoid or manage risks are recorded.

## **Procedures and Policies**

Vision North Somerset has policies and procedures in place to assist with the operation of the Charity; these include Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Volunteer Policy, Disciplinary, Grievance and Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. Policies are reviewed on a regular schedule.

Vision North Somerset maintains and regularly reviews a risk register to support the management of significant risks. Mitigating actions to avoid or manage risks are recorded.

## **The objects of the Charity are:**

The prevention and alleviation of the effects of blindness and impaired vision and hearing loss.



## Summary of services and activities

Vision North Somerset offers a holistic suite of services and activities to people with visual impairment and a hearing equipment service.

Our activities focus on key areas for people with visual impairment:

- **Individual support** (information, advice and guidance based on a needs assessment)
- **Aids and equipment**
- **Vision rehabilitation**
- **Social support** (social groups and befriending)
- **Digital support** (training and support to use the internet and assistive technology)

We administer the **Registration** process for people with visual impairment on behalf of North Somerset Council after they have been Certified Visually Impaired by an Ophthalmologist.

The **hearing equipment service** offers impartial assessments, advice, and training around equipment in the home to help people maximise their independence. Equipment can then be fitted in the home by our Hearing Officer, if required.

### Public benefit statement

The Trustees are aware of their duty to have regard for the Charity Commission guidance on Public Benefit in the exercise of their powers and duties and they take this into account in their decision making. This annual report describes activities undertaken this year to meet Vision North Somerset's charitable purpose.

Trustees are clear about who can benefit from the Charity's activities. People using Vision North Somerset's services must have low vision or be blind or partially sighted or be deaf or hard of hearing. Vision North Somerset works with families, carers and health and social care professionals supporting people who fit into the categories above.

# Achievements and performance

## Summary

Vision North Somerset is the local sight loss charity for North Somerset, providing community based, practical and emotional support for visually impaired people, many of whom are older and have multiple health issues. **In 2022-23 we helped 325 visually impaired people from babies to people in their 90s.** We also helped **260 hearing impaired or deaf people** with our hearing equipment service. A proportion of our service users will have both hearing loss and sight loss – more likely as people age.

We often support people for years with a range of services as needed. During 2022-23 we provided over **966 individual service interventions** to people with visual impairment or hearing impairment.

At the end of the financial year, Vision North Somerset employed **7.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff** over 11 roles with most staff members working part-time.

Demand for our services was high and growing during 2022-23 due to a range of factors including the ageing population of our area, the cost-of-living crisis, the lingering effects of the pandemic and pressures on NHS and statutory services. As a well-connected local charity in a small unitary authority with few local charities, Vision North Somerset provides a lifeline for many. We not only offer direct support but we also advise on and refer to other local services.

*“If I didn’t know I could get you on the end of the phone, I would be petrified. I don’t say I rely on you, but you’re always there.”*  
Mary

## **Service re-development during 2022**

In June 2022 Vision North Somerset faced the end of funding from two different grants, totalling over a third of our income. Despite significant fundraising achievements, we were unable to sustain the staffing funded by these grants, so we had to reduce the number of roles in the Charity.

As a result of the changes in Vision North Somerset's income and learnings from the three-year grant funded project, we re-designed some of the services to be more efficient and empowering. We have ceased some activities which were previously offered for example, funded counselling sessions. Where we have had to reduce services, we refer to other local services for support.

Changes to services were led by feedback from people with visual impairment, for example the technology service re-design was based on the results of a survey of people on the technology training waiting list. We have learned from our own experience and taken inspiration from the experiences of other charities within the sight loss sector. Social and support groups have been co-produced with visually impaired people and volunteers – many of whom are visually impaired themselves.

**Our aim in all service design is to empower people and move them towards independence within a supportive community network.**

## **New strategy development**

The previous Vision North Somerset strategy ended in 2022. After the pandemic and the changes at the Charity, we felt that the time was right to undertake a significant consultation with our stakeholders to guide our new strategy. Working with an experienced consultant, during late 2022 and early 2023 we undertook a range of activities including:

- A research review including local and national statistics and demographics, research on the needs and desires of people with visual impairment and hearing impairment.
- Online, paper and telephone surveys with people with visual impairment, hearing impairment, volunteers and local professionals working with us.
- A staff workshop.
- Two workshops with staff, local people with visual impairment or hearing impairment and local professionals.

The new 5-year strategy is due to be completed and communicated during 2023. It will be reviewed annually to account for the volatile situation in England and in the charity sector.

## **Achievements – Services**

### **Help to adjust – Individual Support, aids and equipment**

An experienced staff member visits people in their homes generally in the early stages of sight loss, or when they are referred to us. The purpose of the visit is to assess the person's individual needs and provide tailored information, advice and guidance. Visits take about an hour and cover issues such as the

home environment, risks such as falls or burns, living skills, personal care, and wellbeing.

Assessment often results in referral to other Vision North Somerset services such as Vision Rehabilitation, Social Support or Hearing equipment. We work closely with external organisations, providing referrals or joint working, for example Occupational Therapists (for people at risk of falling), local housing associations, Woodspring Talking Newspaper; dementia support, community transport, the Stroke team and many more.

Our staff briefly discuss aids and equipment in their first visit. People can then use the Visual Impairment Equipment Service at any time. They visit our well-equipped Resource Centre, or we can visit them at home if needed for them to try out aids and receive personalised advice.

We receive Certificates of Visual Impairment from Hospital Ophthalmology services and manage the Registration process. This includes issuing people with a registration card and informing people of the benefits of Registration.

In 2022-23 we provided **assessments, information, and advice for 225 people** through a mixture of home visits, telephone calls, and visits to our Resource Centre.

*“When I was first diagnosed at Bristol Eye Hospital, Vision North Somerset were the first on the scene. The help was incredible. The white lights were the main thing – in the kitchen where I can do some chopping. I got these wonderful sunglasses; they helped me do gardening.”*

## **Help to get about and with daily living – Vision Rehabilitation**

Our experienced Vision Rehabilitation Specialist helps people to regain independence after sight loss, whether that's being able to use public transport or use their cooker safely to prepare a meal. People receive a comprehensive mobility assessment and a plan with regular (usually weekly) training sessions to build confidence, skills, and safety. Unlike many parts of the UK, we are proud to be able to offer first appointments within two-three weeks of first request. Our support is based on need, rather than being time-limited as is required by the 2019 Vision Rehabilitation Standards 'See, Plan and Provide'.

Our Vision Rehabilitation Specialist can also offer functional low vision appointments focussing on lighting and magnification to make the best use of remaining vision.

In 2022-23 we provided **288 rehab sessions or low vision appointments**.

*“Staff very helpful - supplying aids, lighting - home visits - recommending equipment”.*

## **Help to stay in touch – Social Support**

Research shows that blind and partially sighted people may be particularly vulnerable to loneliness, anxiety, and depression. During the Covid years (2020-2022), many of our service users became even more isolated. Vision North Somerset's peer support work aims to ensure that visually impaired people have regular opportunities to meet each other to share experiences and opportunities to link into community activities.

Recognising how difficult it can be for visually impaired people to travel, we provided social groups in local communities. Members meet in person for coffee, lunch, or around a shared interest such as swimming or reading (using audio books). Groups are facilitated by sighted and visually impaired volunteers with light-touch support from our staff.

Those unable to get out and about are encouraged to join one of our phone groups. Using a specialist telephone conferencing system, people join a regular call around a theme or mutual interest such as the creative arts, or using technology, sharing ideas and experiences.

In addition to the groups, we have a small Befriending Service, whereby sighted and visually impaired volunteers are trained, and then carefully matched to visually impaired people at high risk of isolation. Befrienders visit or connect by phone weekly and our staff keep in touch with both parties to ensure that it's a positive and mutually beneficial experience.

We also trialled a four week online 'Living with Sight Loss' course delivered in partnership with RNIB. The course covers basic information about visual impairment, services, and support available from health care, social care and the third sector and more.

**During 2022-23 we had 6 in-person social groups and 4 phone groups, with 73 visually impaired people attending one or more group. 9 people were matched to Befrienders.**

*"I'd be climbing walls without these groups". "Meeting people has been so important."*

*"I thought I was the only person with sight loss in this area, so nice to find out I'm not the only one."*



## Help to get connected – Technology Support

There is huge potential for digital technology such as smart phones to help visually impaired people live more independently. However, people with sight loss are often unable to use standard technology, either because they can't see well enough or because they are older and have never learned.

Our Technology advice and training service, helps people learn skills and use accessibility features and specialist equipment for tasks such as online banking and shopping. We help people access everyday activities like social media, reading, using a Smart TV, Alexa, email, and word processing.

Activities include one to one training, group support and talks/workshops hosted by local libraries throughout North Somerset.

Last year, **282 people benefited from technology support.** The life changing benefits that come with being able to use a device to get online, communicate, access services and information have led to high demand, and we expect this project to grow significantly in 2023-24.

*“I text all my family now, especially my grandchildren. It's lovely keeping in touch because I'm on my own.”*

## Help for hard-of-hearing – Hearing equipment service

People with hearing impairment are at high risk of social isolation, poor mental health and developing dementia, which can lead to increased care needs. Our hearing equipment service helps people maintain independence, pursue leisure activities and sustain social connections.

Our experienced Hearing Equipment Officer visits people at home to provide personalised advice on the appropriate equipment for each person such as doorbells, telephones and devices to help people hear the television. He provides referrals to the Fire Service regarding fire alarms. He fits the equipment and trains people in using it, for example explaining how to use Bluetooth technology to older people who have no prior experience.

Our hearing service works closely with the local Social Worker for the Deaf, supporting a monthly hard-of-hearing social group in our meeting room. We also liaise with hospital audiology departments and high street audiology, as well as providing awareness talks and personalised advice about hearing loops to local organisations.

*“Very long waiting lists are a problem with other organisations....  
Regarding Vision - the visiting agent... (is) excellent and very helpful with information and equipment.”*

## Financial Review

The year end funds of the Charity had decreased by £22,375 (including a pension adjustment of £8,000) to £312,983, of which £285,886 (2022 - £286,280) were unrestricted, £27,097 (2022 - £49,078) were restricted. The Charity's free reserves at the year-end have decreased by £9,537 to £214,472. Free reserves are calculated as net current assets held within unrestricted funds and excluding the pension reserve and fixed assets.

During the year ended 31 March 2023, the final entrant in the scheme left the employment of the Charity thereby crystallising the pension scheme at this point. At the date of approval of the accounts, the final funded balance due on the scheme is yet uncalculated by the scheme actuary and therefore the most reliable estimate available of the balance owed has been included. This balance of £340,000 is included within creditors due within one year as repayments terms for the amount owed have not yet been agreed. The property at 3 Neva Road is security against this debt. Repayment terms will be discussed and agreed as soon as possible and may include repayment over the long term.

## Reserves Policy Statement

Vision North Somerset's reserves policy (set in June 2022) sets aside two levels of cash reserves to be met by unrestricted funds:

- A buffer amount that will allow the organisation to continue to operate whilst income is reduced.
- A closure amount that will be used if Vision North Somerset ceases activity and closes to allow the organisation to meet essential expenses.

Tier one is set at three months' operating costs (£78,000 in June 2022). Tier two is calculated as the costs to cover an additional three months' salaries, plus statutory redundancy payments (£60,500 in June 2022). This fund will be used in the event of Vision North Somerset ceasing operations.

## **Actions to deliver the policy**

A reserve of £35,000 was held to cover notice periods with a further £66,000 held to fund the expected Local Government Pension Scheme deficit. Redundancy costs and the demands of creditors would be met from the sale of the assets of the organisation, including the premises at 3 Neva Road.

The reserves policy was updated in August 2022 to respond to the changing economic climate, guidance from trust funders and The Charity Commission. Vision North Somerset now operates a two-tier reserves policy with Tier 1 supporting the Charity through periods of reduced income, and Tier 2 supporting staff salaries and redundancy costs if liquidation was required. Details will be updated for the next annual report and are available on request. The reserve policy now covers almost six months of the Charity's running costs.

The Trustees aim to secure financial support sufficient to ensure that the minimum reserves target continues to be met, and that funds are available to cover future capital expenditure or unexpected costs.

## Plans for future periods

Vision North Somerset has worked with people with sight or hearing loss, partner organisations, staff and volunteers and learned from local and national research to create a new five-year strategy. The key pillars of this strategy are four priorities around service delivery and one around organisational development.

- **Connect** – we will provide opportunities for people to come together with others in similar situations and with the wider community.
- **Inform** – we will support people to access the information, advice, and guidance they need, when and how they need it.
- **Enable** – we will support people to develop or rebuild the skills they need to maintain their independence and live the way they choose.
- **Empower** – we will work with local and national partners to support people to make their voices heard and to raise awareness on issues that matter to them.
- **Build On Our Strong Foundations** –we will continue to develop a well-funded and managed organisation to support the delivery of high-quality services to support local people.

For 2024-25 the focus will be on continuing to deliver excellent support for local people and on increasing and diversifying our funding so that we are able to reach more people with more support in future years.

## Principal Funding Sources

Vision North Somerset is primarily funded by grants from trusts, foundations and other sources including statutory funding. We are also grateful to the individuals, local organisations and small businesses who choose to support our vital local work.

The Charity is grateful for financial support from the following:

- Ian Karten Charitable Trust
- Quartet Community Foundation
- National Lottery Awards for All
- Thomas Pocklington Trust
- St Monica Trust
- Voluntary Action North Somerset
- Age UK Bristol
- Postcode Local Trust
- Ashwell's Charitable Trust
- Leonard Laity Stoate
- David Family Foundation
- Waitrose Community Foundation (Weston-super-Mare)
- Tesco
- Town and Parish councils including: - Churchill, Yatton and Clevedon

North Somerset Council is a significant funder of Vision North Somerset. Its grant supports specific activities within the scope of our contract and makes a contribution towards operational costs.

## Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the income and expenditure of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed/constitution.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the board on ..... and signed on their behalf by:

.....  
M Mackle  
Chair of Trustees



## **Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Vision North Somerset**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts for Vision North Somerset ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2023.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the Trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

Since the Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not comply with these records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a “true and fair view” which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

### **Emphasis of matter**

I draw your attention to note 1.12 which sets out the basis on which the balance owed on crystallisation of the local government pension scheme has been accounted for. There is significant uncertainty with regards to the amount and timing of this payment. My report is not modified in respect of this matter.

I have no other concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....  
Michelle Ferris BSc (Hons) FCA DChA  
Albert Goodman LLP  
Goodwood House  
Blackbrook Park Avenue  
Taunton  
Somerset  
TA1 2PX

Dated: .....

# Vision North Somerset

## Statement of Financial Activities

For the Year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	Unre- stricted Funds	Re- stricted Funds	Total 2023	Unre- stricted Funds	Re- stricted Funds	Total 2022
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations (including grants)	2	37,116	255,921	293,037	36,246	336,956	373,202
Other trading activities	3	16,477	-	16,477	24,435	-	24,435
Income from investments	4	1,994	-	1,994	181	-	181
<b>Total</b>		<b>55,587</b>	<b>255,921</b>	<b>311,508</b>	<b>60,862</b>	<b>336,956</b>	<b>397,818</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities	5	74,654	267,229	341,883	24,733	295,256	319,989
<b>Total</b>		<b>74,654</b>	<b>267,229</b>	<b>341,883</b>	<b>24,733</b>	<b>295,256</b>	<b>319,989</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year before transfers</b>		<b>(19,067)</b>	<b>(11,308)</b>	<b>(30,375)</b>	<b>36,129</b>	<b>41,700</b>	<b>77,829</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		<b>10,673</b>	<b>(10,673)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,571</b>	<b>(11,571)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other recognised losses:</b>							
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	14	8,000	-	8,000	68,000	-	68,000
<b>Net movements in funds</b>		<b>(394)</b>	<b>(21,981)</b>	<b>(22,375)</b>	<b>115,700</b>	<b>30,129</b>	<b>145,829</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 April		286,280	49,078	335,358	170,580	18,949	189,529
Fund balances at 31 March		285,886	27,097	312,983	286,280	49,078	335,358

The results for the year derive from continuing activities and there are no gains or losses other than those shown above.

# Vision North Somerset

## Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	8	411,414	410,271
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stock		3,316	7,110
Debtors		80	-
Cash at bank and in hand		212,942	207,501
Investments	9	66,000	66,000
		<u>282,338</u>	<u>280,611</u>
<b>Creditors</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>(380,769)</u>	<u>(7,524)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>(98,431)</u>	<u>273,087</u>
<b>Net assets excluding pension liabilities</b>		<u>312,983</u>	<u>683,358</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liabilities		<u>-</u>	<u>(348,000)</u>
<b>Total net assets including pension liabilities</b>		<u>312,983</u>	<u>335,358</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds excluding pension reserve	11	285,886	634,280
Pension reserve		-	(348,000)
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>		<u>285,886</u>	<u>286,280</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>	11	<u>27,097</u>	<u>49,078</u>
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>312,983</u>	<u>335,358</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on  
..... and signed on their behalf by:

.....  
M Mackle  
Chair of Trustees

.....  
J Brice  
Trustee

# Vision North Somerset

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31 March 2023

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### **1 Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows.

#### **1.1 Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared under the historic cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Charity meets the definition of public benefit under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

#### **1.2 Income**

Income from grants and donations is recognised in the year in which they are receivable when there is evidence of

entitlement, receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

Income from government grants and local authorities is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Where no conditions are attached to the grant income they are recognised within donations and legacies and where conditions relating to performance of services are attached, grant income is recognised in income from charitable activities within the Statement of Financial Activities.

Income from other trading activities is included in the period in which the Charity is entitled to receipt, it is probable that economic benefits will flow to the entity and the amount can be reliably measured.

### **1.3 Expenditure**

Resources expended are recognised on the accruals basis to match the period in which the expenditure was incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

## **1.4 Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets over their estimated useful lives at the following rate:

Freehold property	– 1% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	– 25% straight line

Fixed assets are capitalised where the expenditure incurred is in excess of £500 and the asset purchased is considered to have a long-term benefit to the organisation.

## **1.5 Debtors**

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for services performed in the ordinary activities of the Charity.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the Charity will not be able to collect all amounts due to according to the original terms of the receivables.

Other debtors comprise amounts due from prepayments. Amounts due from prepayments arise from the payments for services prior to benefit from those services.

## **1.6 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

## **1.7 Creditors**

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

## **1.8 Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Cost is calculated on a first in, first out basis.

## **1.9 Taxation**

Vision North Somerset is a registered Charity and is therefore not liable to corporation tax to the extent that income and gains are applied to charitable purposes.

## **1.10 Investments**

Investments are held at fair value determined by the amounts held in National Savings and Investments bonds.

## **1.11 Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets this criterion is



charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

### **1.12 Local Government Pension Scheme**

Retirement benefits to employees of Vision North Somerset are provided by the Avon Pension Fund Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). This is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme, that is contracted out of State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme ('SERPS'), and the assets are held separately from those at Vision North Somerset.

The LGPS is a funded pension scheme and the assets are held separately from those of Vision North Somerset in separate trustee administered funds. Pension Scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service cost and gains and losses on settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. Past service costs are recognised immediately, the costs are recognised over the period until vesting occurs. The expected return on assets and the interest cost are shown as a net finance amount of other finance costs or credit adjacent to interest. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other gains and losses.

During the year ended 31 March 2023, the final entrant in the scheme left the employment of the Charity thereby

crystalising the scheme at this point. At the date of approval of the accounts, the final funded balance due on the scheme is yet uncalculated by the Scheme Actuary and therefore the most reliable estimate available of the balance owed has been included. This balance of £340,000 is included within creditors due within one year as repayment terms for the amount owed have not yet been agreed.

### **1.13 Defined contribution pension scheme**

In addition to the LGPS, the Charity also operates a defined contribution pension scheme (NEST) for those not entitled to join the LGPS. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which fixed contributions (7.5% employer contribution) are paid into a pension fund and the Charity has no legal or contrastive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as staff pension expenses through the SOFA when they are due.

### **1.14 Going concern**

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to the events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of the period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements.

The Trustees have concluded that the likelihood is that funding will be available to support the objectives of the Charity and that the Charity has adequate resources to

continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. There are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

## **1.15 Financial instruments**

The Charity only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and liabilities of the Charity and their measurements are as follows:

Financial assets – trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank – is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

Financial liabilities – trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments' disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

# Vision North Somerset

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year ended 31 March 2023

2 Donations and legacies	Unre- stricted Funds £	Re- stricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Unre- stricted Funds £	Re- stricted Funds £	Total 2022 £
<b>Grant income</b>						
Ian Karten Charitable Trust	-	9,503	9,503	-	-	-
The Big Lottery	-	-	-	-	114,084	114,084
North Somerset Council Social Services*	-	164,885	164,885	-	165,600	165,600
VANS Chat & Connect	-	4,829	4,829	-	-	-
Thomas Pocklington Trust	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	-
Postcode Local Trust	-	22,423	22,423	-	-	-
Quartet Volunteering	-	19,726	19,726	-	-	-
NSC - Infection Control Fund*	-	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
St Monica Peer Support	-	16,581	16,581	-	19,789	19,789
Quartet - Talking for health	-	-	-	-	19,683	19,683
Quartet Express	-	-	-	-	4,900	4,900
Awards for All - Helping each other	-	-	-	-	9,900	9,900
Tesco - Groundwork						
UK - Digital	-	500	500	-	-	-
Age UK Bristol -						
Digital Inclusion	-	1,974	1,974	-	-	-
VANS	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-
St Monica Trust						
Coronation	-	500	500	-	-	-
	-	255,921	255,921	-	336,956	336,956
Donations	37,116	-	37,116	36,246	-	36,246
	37,116	255,921	293,037	36,246	336,956	373,202

\*denotes local government funding

<b>3 Other trading activities</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Other	947	-	947	6,602	-	6,602
Re-sale equipment	10,092	-	10,092	16,073	-	16,073
Room hire	5,438	-	5,438	1,760	-	1,760
	<u>16,477</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,477</u>	<u>24,435</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,435</u>
<b>4 Investment Income</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Bank interest receivable	1,994	-	1,994	181	-	181
	<u>1,994</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,994</u>	<u>181</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>181</u>
<b>5 Direct charitable expenditure</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	<b>Unre- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Re- stricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Wages and salaries	33,304	195,712	229,016	7,296	229,064	236,360
Core and operating costs	3,680	58,921	62,601	10,782	36,174	46,956
Legal and professional	2,419	9,396	11,815	-	6,343	6,343
Re-sale equipment purchased	13,425	-	13,425	13,409	-	13,409
Project costs	21,826	3,200	25,026	6,766	10,155	16,921
Contribution to core costs	-	-	-	(13,520)	13,520	-
	<u>74,654</u>	<u>267,229</u>	<u>341,883</u>	<u>24,733</u>	<u>295,256</u>	<u>319,989</u>

<b>6 Employees</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Wages and salaries	191,237	196,027
Social security costs	7,939	7,316
Pension costs (note 14)	29,840	33,017
	<u>229,016</u>	<u>236,360</u>

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No individual was paid over £60,000 (2022: none).

The average number of employees for the year was as follows:

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Number of staff	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>

One person is considered key management personnel of the Charity, being the Chief Executive Officer & Interim Chief Executive Officer. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the Charity were £42,572 (2022: £32,578), including employers' national insurance and employers pension contributions.

The Charity operates both defined benefit and defined contribution pension schemes. The charge in the Statement of Financial Activities for the year is shown above. Contributions totalling £nil (2022: £nil) were payable to the schemes at the year end and are included in creditors. Further details of the defined benefit scheme are given in note 14.

<b>7 Net incoming resources before transfers</b>		<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
This is stated after charging:			
Depreciation		9,450	11,016
Accountants remuneration	- independent examination	1,630	1,500
	- other	1,080	1,080
		<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

**8 Tangible assets**

	<b>Freehold property</b>	<b>Fixtures &amp; Fittings</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
As at 01.04.2022	425,000	119,231	544,231
Additions	-	10,593	10,593
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
As at 31.03.2023	425,000	129,824	554,824
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
As at 01.04.2022	25,510	108,450	133,960
Charge for period	4,252	5,198	9,450
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
As at 31.03.2023	29,762	113,648	143,410
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Net book value</b>			
As at 31.03.2023	395,238	16,176	411,414
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
As at 31.03.2022	399,490	10,781	410,271
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

The pension deficit (to a maximum of £200,000) is secured against the property.

<b>9 Investments</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
National Savings Bond investments	66,000	66,000
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	<u>66,000</u>	<u>66,000</u>

## 10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	-	1,890
Accruals & deferred income	37,835	2,580
Other creditors	2,934	3,054
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	340,000	-
	<u>380,769</u>	<u>7,524</u>
	<u><u>380,769</u></u>	<u><u>7,524</u></u>
<b>Deferred income</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Deferred income brought forward	-	-
Released in year	-	-
Deferred in the year	35,000	-
	<u>35,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Deferred income carried forward	<u>35,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>35,000</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

Deferred income relates to a grant received from the St Monica Trust – Digital Inclusion which will start 1 April 2023.



11 Statement of Funds	Balance 01.04.22 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers/ (losses) £	Balance 31.03.23 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Ian Karten Centre	-	9,503	(605)	(8,898)	-
North Somerset Council					
Social Services	-	164,885	(164,805)	(80)	-
VANS Chat & Connect	-	4,829	(4,829)	-	-
VANS	-	5,000	-	-	5,000
The Big Lottery	25,884	-	(25,884)	-	-
Postcode Local Trust	-	22,423	(15,027)	-	7,396
Thomas Pocklington Trust	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
Quartet Express Grant	155	-	(155)	-	-
Awards for all	3,639	-	(3,639)	-	-
Quartet - Talking for health	8,567	-	(6,872)	(1,695)	-
Quartet - Volunteering		19,726	(16,075)	-	3,651
St Monica Trust - Peer Support	8,411	16,581	(16,376)	-	8,616
St Monica Trust - Coronation	-	500	-	-	500
Age UK Bristol - Digital Inclusion	-	1,974	(40)	-	1,934
Tesco - Groundwork UK - Digital	-	500	(500)	-	-
NSC Infection Control Fund	2,422	-	(2,422)	-	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>49,078</b>	<b>255,921</b>	<b>(267,229)</b>	<b>(10,673)</b>	<b>27,097</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension reserve	634,280	55,587	(74,654)	(329,327)	285,886
Pension reserve	(348,000)	-	-	348,000	-
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>286,280</b>	<b>55,587</b>	<b>(74,654)</b>	<b>18,673</b>	<b>285,886</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>335,358</b>	<b>311,508</b>	<b>(341,883)</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>312,983</b>

	<b>Balance 01.04.21 £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Transfers/ (losses) £</b>	<b>Balance 31.03.22 £</b>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Ian Karten Centre	2,819	-	(2,819)	-	-
North Somerset Council Social Services	-	165,600	(165,600)	-	-
Quartet Community Foundation (Digital Profile)	873	-	(873)	-	-
The Big Lottery	12,136	114,084	(98,566)	(1,770)	25,884
National Lottery Awards	2,542	-	(2,542)	-	-
Thomas Pocklington Trust	579	-	(579)	-	-
Quartet Express Grant	-	4,900	-	(4,745)	155
Awards for all	-	9,900	(6,261)	-	3,639
Quartet - Talking for health	-	19,683	(10,292)	(824)	8,567
St Monica Trust	-	19,789	(7,146)	(4,232)	8,411
NSC Infection Control Fund	-	3,000	(578)	-	2,422
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>18,949</b>	<b>336,956</b>	<b>(295,256)</b>	<b>(11,571)</b>	<b>49,078</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
Unrestricted funds excluding pension reserve	580,580	60,862	(18,733)	11,571	634,280
Pension reserve	(410,000)	-	(6,000)	68,000	(348,000)
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>170,580</b>	<b>60,862</b>	<b>(24,733)</b>	<b>79,571</b>	<b>286,280</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>189,529</b>	<b>397,818</b>	<b>(319,989)</b>	<b>68,000</b>	<b>335,358</b>

## **The purposes for material funds are as follows:**

- Ian Karten Centre fund are amounts received for the purchase of information technology assets that will aid the training of the visually impaired. Fund is reduced by the purchase and depreciation of assets.
- The Social Services fund is the North Somerset District Council grant for the sensory impairment service offered by Vision North Somerset commissioned on behalf of the Local Authority.
- The Big Lottery Fund is to fund the 'in sight, in touch' project providing a suite of services to people with visual impairment.
- National Lottery Awards for All is for staff and volunteer training costs to be able to better support service users.
- Thomas Pocklington Trust – funding to develop a new long-term strategy for the Charity.
- Quartet Community Foundation - Talking for health is for delivering IT advice and training to people with visual impairment.
- St Monica Trust is for delivering peer support and social inclusion activities such as social groups and support groups.
- Postcode Local Trust – developing and growing social and wellbeing support for people with visual impairment.
- Quartet Community Foundation – the development and growth of the volunteering programme.

When fixed assets have been purchased with restricted funds, upon purchase, a transfer has been made from restricted to unrestricted. During the year, this amounted to £10,593 of fixed assets being purchased using restricted funds (2022: £11,571).

## 12 Related party transactions

No remuneration has been paid to Trustees during the year (2022: none). Two trustees were reimbursed travelling expenses during the year totalling £334 (2022: one - £7).

## 13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unre- stricted Funds £	Re- stricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Unre- stricted Funds £	Re- stricted Funds £	Total 2022 £
Tangible assets	411,414	-	411,414	410,271	-	410,271
Net current assets excluding pension reserve	(125,528)	27,097	(98,431)	224,009	49,078	273,087
Pension reserve	-	-	-	(348,000)	-	(348,000)
	<u>285,886</u>	<u>27,097</u>	<u>312,983</u>	<u>286,280</u>	<u>49,078</u>	<u>335,358</u>

## 14 Pension commitments

Some of the Charity's employees belong to the Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) managed by the Avon Pension Fund ("APF").

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation for the LGPS was 31 March 2020.

The scheme is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with assets held in a separate Trustee-administrated fund.

During the ended 31 March 2023, the final entrant in the scheme left the employment of the Charity thereby crystallising the scheme at this point. An amount has been included within creditors due under one year for the final

balance owed which is on a different valuation basis to that of the previous actuarial valuations. There is therefore no actuarial valuation carried out for the scheme as at 31 March 2023 and the disclosure below relates to the comparative disclosure only.

**Summary of net pension liability as at 31 March 2023**

	<b>Total 2023 £'000</b>	<b>Total 2022 £'000</b>
Present value of defined benefit obligations	-	(1,223)
Fair value of share of scheme assets	-	875
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Deficit in the scheme	-	(348)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**Principal Actuarial Assumptions**

	<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>At 31 March 2022</b>
Salary increases	-	4.90%
Pension increases	-	3.50%
Discount rate	-	2.80%
CPI increases	-	3.40%

## 14 Pension commitments (cont.)

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for the future improvements in mortality rates.

The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:

	At 31 March 2023	At 31 March 2022
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	-	23.1
Females	-	25.3
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	-	24.6
Females	-	27.3

### The Trust's share of the assets and liabilities in the Avon Pension Fund are as follows:

	As at 31 March 2023		As at 31 March 2022	
	Fair value £'000	% of total scheme assets	Fair value £'000	% of total scheme assets
Equities	-	-	353	41%
Gilts	-	-	109	12%
Other bonds	-	-	66	8%
Property	-	-	59	7%
Cash	-	-	14	2%
Other	-	-	274	31%
Total market value of assets	-	-	875	100%
Present value of scheme Liabilities - funded	-		(1,223)	
Deficit in the scheme	-		(348)	

The actual return on scheme assets was nil (2022: £80,000).

## 14 Pension commitments (cont.)

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities are as follows:

	At 31 March 2023 £'000	At 31 March 2022 £'000
Current service cost (net of employee contributions)	-	(25)
Net interest cost	-	(7)
Admin expenses	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(32)</u>

Movements in the present value of defined benefit obligations were as follows:

	At 31 March 2023 £'000	At 31 March 2022 £'000
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	(1,223)	(1,221)
Current service cost	-	(25)
Interest cost	-	(24)
Estimated benefits paid	-	45
Employee contributions	-	(4)
Actuarial gains/(losses)	-	6
Transfer out on crystallisation	1,223	-
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,223)</u>

Movements in the fair value of the Charity's share of scheme assets were as follows:

	At 31 March 2023 £'000	At 31 March 2022 £'000
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	875	811
Interest income	-	17
Expected return on fund assets	-	62
Employer contributions	-	26
Employee contributions	-	4
Estimated benefits paid	-	(45)
Transfer out on crystallisation	(875)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	-	875
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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