



"Our Vision is to support the vision of others"

Registered Charity No. 211436

"Our vision is to support the vision of others"

100th Annual Report  
for the year ended  
31st March 2021

## Trustees

From 1st April 2020

Chairman	Robert Horner*
Vice Chairman	Peter Jensen* **
Secretary	James Grimshaw*
Treasurer	Sara Horbury*

Members	Eric Mitchell
	Doreen Flockton
	Alistair Ratcliffe
	John Mellor
	Robert Sergeant
	David Fisher
	Mary Kirk
	Stephen Kirk

\* Indicates a member of Executive Committee

\*\* Indicates committee member representing visually impaired

Hon. President	Pauline Nolan
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Chaplain	Rev Michael Wearing
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## Staff

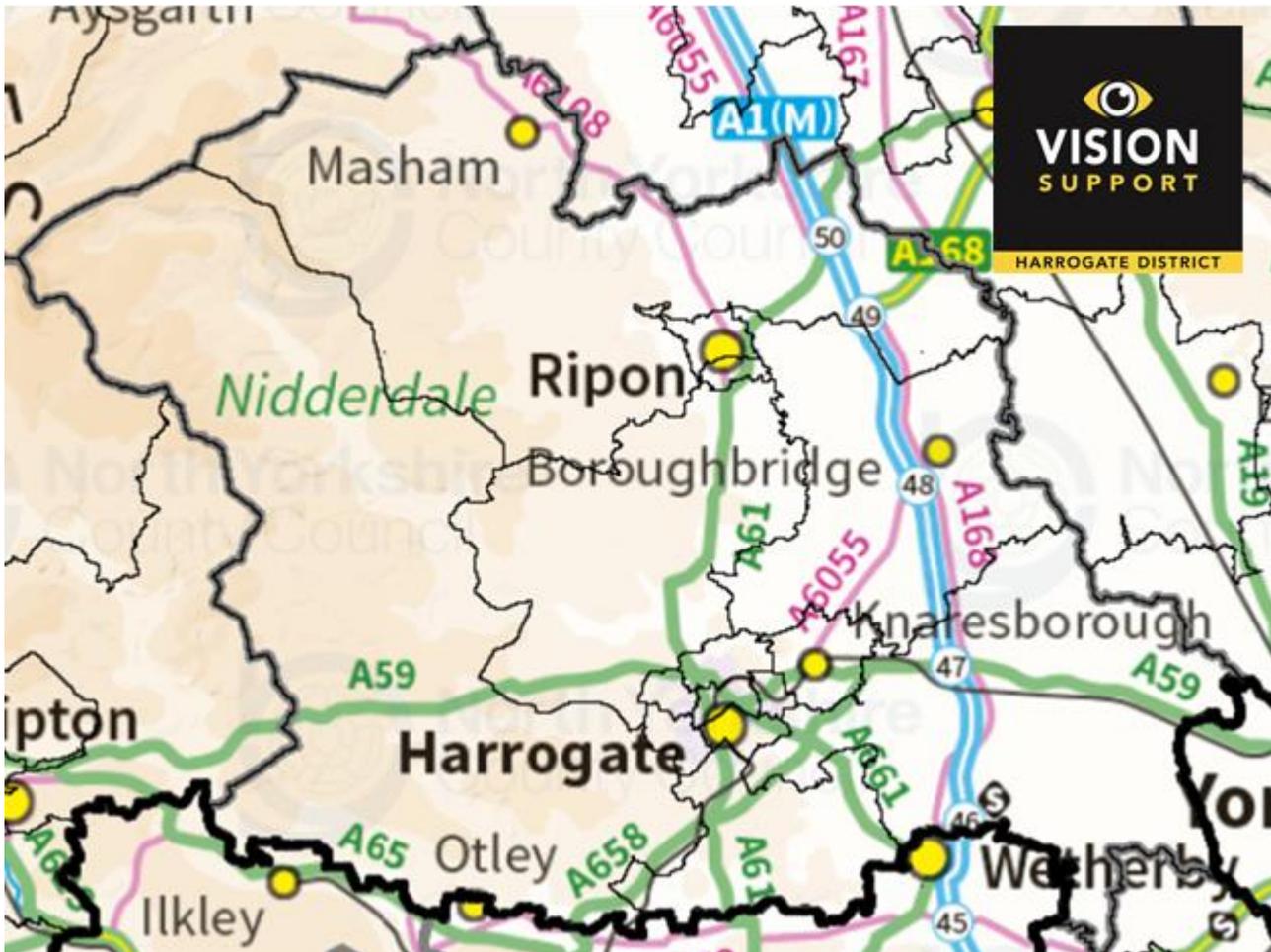
Director of Services	Tanya Stimpson
Administrator	Leesha Metcalf
Home Visitor	Susan Richards
Home Visitor	Charlotte Seaton
ECLO	Lauren Kaptain
Pottery Tutor	Kay Latto

## Constitution

“To respond appropriately to the needs of visually impaired people in the Harrogate district and in particular to provide and maintain a centre for social meetings and handicraft training for visually impaired people, entertainments, travel and holiday facilities and recreational health safety or occupational requisites to visually impaired people or their dependents.”

## Who can we help?

Our services are accessible to anyone over the age of 18 experiencing sight loss, who lives within the boundaries of the Borough of Harrogate. However, if someone needs help and advice and lives in an area which has no help service, we are happy to advise and signpost accordingly.



Membership and our services are all free for members, their families and carers, with the exception of items for sale in the Resource Centre, social meals out, activities arranged by third parties and outings.

The Vision Support Centre on East Parade is open Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 4.00 pm and there is a telephone answering service if no one is immediately available.

## **A challenging year for our Centenary**

This wasn't the celebration we had hoped for. No one could ever have imagined that in such a short time, the whole world could be shut down by a virus, this usually only happens in the movies, however, it did happen, none of us knew how long the virus was going to be with us, across the globe we are all having to learn and adapt to living with the COVID virus.

It was important to us to carry on providing emotional and practical support to those that needed it in our sight loss community, after all over our 100 years we have had to continually adapt to meet the needs of our community even through the Second World War.



Early in the pandemic, Vision Support identified the greatest challenges for our members and adapted our services accordingly. The team worked together on new service delivery and ways in which we could continue supporting our existing members and those new to sight loss. We worked closely with the Eye Clinic teams at Harrogate Hospital and NYCC Sensory Team so that we could continuously adapt our support services around their service provision. This ensured that our sight loss community were receiving the help and support they needed throughout the pandemic.

Although this year has been challenging, especially for those our charity exists to serve, it has also had lots of successes. We hope to share these with you throughout this report. We shouldn't go any further though, without thanking our Vision Support Team, despite their own challenges they have given their all, their hearts, and souls to loosen ever so slightly the chains of isolation, offering genuine, compassion, friendship and support to our members and our community.

### **Important beginnings**

One of our first points of contact is our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer Service, offering practical and emotional support to those who are newly diagnosed with an eye condition or sight loss. Under usual circumstances we would deliver this service by attending the hospital eye clinics and holding face to face consultations with patients. Due to Covid restrictions, we adapted to offer this service remotely by contacting referred patients by phone. This allowed more time to talk for patients at the right time, when they may be concerned about their eye condition, where to find extra support during Covid, their future with sight loss, staying in work, driving, and managing at home with everyday tasks. Our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, Lauren, was able to offer the emotional & practical support that was so desperately needed. Our Eye Clinic Liaison Service was also invaluable to the hospital Low Vision Clinic, Lauren was able to support the clinic staff through their transition to a remote service, Lauren made 100's of appointment follow up calls to offer advice and support to those patients. **Overall, the Eye Clinic Liaison Service Supported 266 new patients and continued to support all our existing members who required liaison services.** Many of those new patients continue to be supported by us.

## **Lauren Kaptain talks about her role as an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO)**

April 2020 was such a strange and scary time for us all. I am forever grateful for how the Centre's leadership handled those early days and the various transitions that were to come. The safety of our members, staff, and volunteers was paramount. But, while prioritising safety, the Centre did not shut down. From the very beginning, Tanya and our Trustees realised how crucial it would be to keep going, albeit in a different way. The health and social care systems were being understandably reshuffled, with many front line staff redeployed, and we at VSHD needed to maintain — strengthen, even — advocacy and access to support for people with sight loss (including people who would lose sight *during* COVID).

My role as Eye Clinic Liaison Officer changed dramatically in its physical sense — sadly no more mingling in clinic corridors! — but stayed true to its purpose and intensified in its extent.

The hospital staff were marvellous in how they liaised with me to ensure referrals could carry on. This involved ophthalmology secretaries taking extra time to gather and send paperwork by post (which I would have previously collected in person), coordinating with me on password protected files (which later led to my getting an NHS email address, a game-changer!), and having regular phone catchups to discuss patient situations.

The hospital Low Vision Clinic adopted a similar approach to ours in refusing to shut down entirely and adapting their methods as well as they could. Mid-pandemic, they asked for my help in running their telephone low vision assessment service — another example of our ever-strengthening relationship with our local NHS.

Throughout the lockdowns, on several occasions, I worked with clinic staff and local opticians to triage and arrange urgent appointments for patients — some of which led to timely diagnosis and treatment for wet AMD, which reduced or prevented permanent sight loss.

With cooperation from clinic staff, consultants, and some brilliant local opticians, we also found different ways of facilitating Certification and Registration, which had become more difficult due to a variety of pandemic-related forces. For eligible patients, this allowed them to access important social and financial benefits, as well as rehabilitation from our incredible North Yorkshire County Council Sensory Team, with whom we also developed a deeper relationship. In fact, increased coordination during COVID led to the establishment of regular meetings between us at VSHD, the Low Vision Clinic, and NYCC Sensory Team - which we hope to carry on long into the future.

I will always remember a comment I read in an online discussion group during the first lockdown. A visually impaired participant commented on our new vocabulary, and how 'isolation' to her really meant 'twice-olation'. She noted she already felt isolated due to sight loss — because of societal barriers and lack of public understanding. Now, as 'social distancing' became part of our daily life (with many visually impaired people unable to gauge their distance from fellow shoppers, walkers, or queuers — some losing confidence to go out at all), bus travel becoming less available, and in-person support services (even visits from friends) fewer and farther between... isolation took on a whole new level.

I hope that for the people we supported with phone calls, letters, and behind-the-scenes liaising... that they felt less alone and felt heard and cared for. Although the year had awful moments, it also had bright spots — long phone conversations and laughter with service users, old and new. Stronger relationships with our NHS and community partners.

Bonding between us as colleagues, who were each experiencing our own challenges along the way. I know that, for myself, these positives kept me going.

I am so pleased to be writing this report knowing our centre is open again, many community services are back up and running, and families are enjoying long-awaited reunions. We may not be out of the woods just yet, but we have come such a long way. I feel fortunate to be part of the VSHD team and able to look forward to a bright future for the centre and the community it serves. We are here for you, for each other.

### **The Vision Support Centre – Russell Sergeant House**

During the pandemic our Centre was open for those new to sight loss by prearranged appointments only, we continued to help people have access to the aids and resources they needed to stay independent and were able to offer socially distanced IT appointments for those who were living alone and were dependent on their technology to live independently. We also opened our Centre to enable the NYCC Sensory Team to bring in new clients with sight loss to help them access information, aids and resources in a safe environment, as at this time there were no home visits being carried out by statutory agencies.

Although the Centre activities were postponed for a year during the pandemic, we are now open and delivering our full range of Centre activities. We offer a vast range of regular activities which promote and encourage independent living and the learning of new skills. The activities we organise are also an opportunity to share experiences from one another and learn ways in which to adapt in order to achieve. We do this through craft and education: IT tuition, basketry, card making, pottery, craft and knitting. Items made in these classes are sold at the

Centre and at events to raise the funds to purchase more materials. Our clay sculptures are often exhibited to showcase the fantastic achievements of our members. The pottery class have been invited to exhibit their work at The Sculpture Show North in the Corn Exchange, Leeds, in October 2021.

[https://sculptureshownorth.co.uk/index.php/exhibitor\\_16/](https://sculptureshownorth.co.uk/index.php/exhibitor_16/)

### **Spreading the support**

Our quarterly newsletter turned into a monthly one, as the lockdown began it became obvious very early on that our sight loss community were unable to access the vital information that was required for them to take advantage of food delivery services, community support and generally what was happening locally in their community and what sight loss services were still available to them nationally. The newsletter became a vital source of accessible information and was available in large print, braille, audio and by email. The newsletter also contained lots of 'things to do', recipes, knitting patterns, quizzes and jokes. It became a resource for members to contact each other and share their thoughts, poems, and ideas to stay busy and occupied during this difficult time of isolation. The newsletter continues to be a great success and a useful resource for keeping our members, volunteers and supporters informed about services, events and useful information relating to sight loss. **7200 accessible newsletters were sent to members.**

We also share our news and events on Facebook and Twitter, the more we post the more we hope to promote our services to an ever-growing population of visually impaired people.

### **Changes to the Home Visiting Service – 1196 vision support calls made.**

Immediate changes were made to our home visiting service as we were no longer able to enter our members homes, instead the home visitors

made regular support calls to their existing members, this enabled them to quickly identify those who were particularly vulnerable and would need more support from ourselves and our local statutory organisations during the pandemic. The home visitors were then able to ensure that our members received the help and support they needed. Our adapted home visiting service was a vital tool in ensuring that new members were fully supported and transitioned smoothly from the ECLO service to be supported by our home visitors over the phone. Many of those people new to sight loss are now attending the Centre for activities and those who are unable to will continue to be called by our home visitors until home visits resume in the New Year.

### **Sue Richards, talks about the challenging year of being a home visitor**

This has been an extremely challenging year for Vision Support Home Visiting as for the whole Country, with the Pandemic which has endured 3 Lockdowns, nearly 9 months of isolation and no visiting allowed.

In the first few months from April 2020, it was extremely challenging and difficult for most of our members in one way or another. I came into the office to answer the phone and deal with any queries and liaise with the other Staff and Volunteers who remained at home. We, as a Team, had weekly zoom meetings so that we could discuss any situations and support each other. We also gathered and shared information, many times coming from the Members themselves, on local shops that would deliver locally for free. This included food emporiums such as Fish and Chip shops and pubs that would do a delivery service for free.

In the first few months, some of the main difficulties for our Members, were things like accessing essential shopping. This was problematic, as those who would normally order online or by telephone ordering, were cut off by many Supermarkets, as unless they had received the Government letter telling them to shield, they didn't have access to online or phoning in their orders. I assisted some by shopping for them and dropping it off or, if it was a resource they required, we delivered it

to their door. For those who were unable to get to the Pharmacy to collect prescriptions and were unable to register with the delivery services as these were inundated and over-subscribed, we collected these prescriptions and dropped them at their doors. We continued to make support phone calls to virtually all our Members, where possible, to keep in touch and hopefully assist with any issues and cheer them up. Many were worried about their health and scared to venture out even for exercise.

As the population were allowed out to do the essentials like food shopping, some Members who could get to the Supermarket found it daunting, as one-way systems in Supermarkets were introduced and the markings were not clear even to a sighted person so, those who were visually impaired, found it even more stressful and became anxious at the thought of going to get groceries. We attained and gave information on certain Supermarkets, that would allocate them a member of staff to assist with shopping in store.

We also encouraged our Members, where possible, to wear a Visually Impaired lanyard, which we had been given by Optelec for free. We sent these out when requested as hopefully it would possibly help to highlight, to other people, to be patient with our members and even offer assistance. Those Members that had them said that they had been a great help.

We made 1000's of calls as a Team, and whilst many remained cheerful, it appeared to be the younger Members that were struggling more, as they were isolated from their social life. We engaged with them on a regular basis to help lessen the isolation. We also made more calls to those who were isolated from relatives who lived in other towns and counties and lived by themselves. Many were very grateful for the interaction with us.

As the end of the first lockdown came, many were wanting to attend the Centre to socialise but for health and safety of the Staff, Volunteers, and the Members the decision was made to remain closed in Autumn 2020.

We continued to support our Members with phone calls and emails. A monthly newsletter was introduced, which was a great talking point for those of us making phone calls, as many of the Members really enjoyed the quizzes and information given in them. As it neared to Christmas 2020, there was a second lockdown, and this had a spiralling effect on our Members who were keen to get out and socialise. The situation declined and come January 2021, we were into the third lockdown for 3 and half months until 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This had another negative effect on people, as many were starting to struggle with the loneliness. Many had now been apart from family and friends for nearly 10 months. It was difficult and challenging to keep the spirits up of those we were phoning, as some would end up getting quite distraught saying that they didn't see the point of being here anymore as they were so lonely. The loneliness, for many was starting to take hold, especially where they may have lost a member of their family. Funerals were very restricted for attendance and if someone was in hospital, there were no visits allowed. We continued to do phone support and again, many were grateful for the contact and someone else to talk too.

On a positive note, during this last year we have gained many new Members who found us through having difficulties in trying to access other services. People were finding it impossible to get hold of or get through too many Organisations but, as we were in the office at least 3 days a week, we were on hand which many were grateful to us for. Hopefully soon they will start to enjoy the Membership in a more normal way from Autumn 2021. Many have appreciated the support phone calls and contact they have had with us and that we were able to assist them in some way.



## **Home visitor Charlotte - Keeping in touch with members during the pandemic, the stirring of memories**

Over this last year, I've travelled all around the world, been to parts of the UK I've never heard of and even travelled back in time. A strange thing to happen during a pandemic. But it's true.

So how did this happen when the world was locked down due to the first pandemic since Spanish Flu in 1918? Through the members of Vision Support, that's how.

By April 2020 we all began to experience the long days of 'lockdown'. There was a palpable blanket of gloom steadily descending and a sense of impending disaster. As one of Vision Support's Home Visitors/Vision Support Advisors, we usually visit members who cannot get to the Centre. But no more home visits to our most isolated members. More isolation on top of what is already a limited lifestyle with little or no family nearby, locked in and locked down, members' homes literally became their prison.

Making the phone calls to our members to say we wouldn't be visiting felt like the hardest thing to do, especially when they needed us most. With each phone call that I made a common theme began to emerge. One of dread. Phone call after phone call, I found myself listening to members talk about how the news of the pandemic was so reminiscent of the announcement that Britain was going to war. I found myself

transported back to WWII. Members described hearing about the pandemic was like reliving hearing that Britain was going to war. They described their feelings of uncertainty, of dread and fear. Asking me if I thought the world would survive? Will life ever be the same again? These answers couldn't be answered back in 1940, nor now. Many of our members saw active service during WWII or were under the age of 18. The pandemic triggered their memories with many asking why am I thinking of this now, I haven't thought about this for years? Members said they'd not been aware that they must have subconsciously buried those feelings upon hearing of the outbreak of WWII and suddenly they came flooding back. Phone call after phone call to members, there was an out-pouring of suppressed or forgotten feelings from long ago. There was the expressed horror that they never thought the world would be on the brink of disaster again. They never thought they would have to face this twice in their lifetimes. Many members who were children in WWII also expressed that now they knew how their parents felt. And now they were having those same feelings of dread about the future for their own children, grand-children and great-grand-children may have to face. For some members, the pandemic news triggered feelings of grief, long suppressed, when they'd experienced the loss of a parent, brother, sister, aunt, or uncle during WWII which, perhaps, they'd never truly processed.

Other powerful memories followed. Rationing. As the 'early' days of being in a pandemic started to make an impact on all our lives, it again reminded our members of war time rationing. While members would marvel at the panic buying of toilet rolls, it triggered their own memories of the lack of food and their restricted diets. Which we now know has enabled the WWII cohort to live so much longer and for some, in much better health than many people younger than them.

My phone calls to members transported me all over the world and all over the UK. From the streets of Liverpool, where a direct bomb hit took out the home of Agnes while she and her family were in the air-raid

shelter in the garden. I heard about the Army of Occupation in Hamburg, Germany from William, who had been posted there during WWII and stayed on afterwards to help rebuild what was once a beautiful city.

And to the Singapore Battle Box, surrendered in 1942 to the Japanese with member Raymond, who began his long WWII service on a flight from “Blighty to Tel Aviv” and how his eyes couldn’t believe seeing beaches with palm trees and such a blue sea. Then onto Malaya. Then back to Raffles Hotel in Singapore for a cold beer. Raymond wondered how the world would cope with this silent and invisible battle. Raymond was very emotional while talking to me. I was touched he was sharing these memories with me.

Now it was time to for some very powerful imaginary from Pat, who grew up in South Shields during WWII. She remembers being in the air-raid shelter in her back yard. The door would be open so they could watch the German planes roaring up the Tyne to drop their bombs on the Newcastle docks. Then one night, a bomb was dropped on the centre of South Shields with a furniture shop taking a direct hit. The next day all the kids went to have a look and Pat remembers seeing bomb-blasted buildings, knee deep in feathers (there were many mattresses in the furniture shop)!

The stories went on and on. There was the heart-breaking news that another member of Vision Support had died in April 2020 after only a few weeks in a care home. Her husband never got to visit her and feels he never got to say goodbye. This happened to many of our members, being unable to visit loved ones during lockdown. And certainly no visitors to their own homes.

As time wore on, and more lockdowns loomed, our members spoke of the effect on their physical and mental health. Many already had limited mobility and were noticing that their strength and stamina was diminishing fast. The smallest of tasks within their homes had now become impossible. One member had become so weak, she couldn’t

even press the entry buzzer to open the main front door to her building. We arranged for a key safe to be installed.

There were the good stories too. Like getting Scott's Porridge Oats for James (only that brand would do) and leaving them on his front doorstep. Of the white cane that disappeared from planet earth, when member Pauline hadn't even left home for six months! All the stops were pulled out with our good working relationships with the Sensory Team at North Yorkshire County Council (who also pulled all their own stops out too) and delivered a new cane the next day. To the emergency deliveries of food, talking watches (a must for the visually impaired) all done by our very own Deliver-Sue, and multi-vitamins to a member who was concerned as their hair had started to fall out. There are many other examples, too many to list.

As home visitors/vision support advisors, now delivering the service over the phone, our role has remained the same. It brought into sharp-focus what is needed to do this: empathy, compassion, good listener, spotting gaps in support, noticing what is not being said, broad knowledge of equipment and support available for VIPs, organisational skills, IT skills, up to date knowledge of benefits, safeguarding, the care act, building and maintaining productive relationships with social services, GPs, voluntary sector organisations, ability to give up-to-date, accurate advice and information, signposting, resilience, resourcefulness, the ability to cope with emotions (both ours' and members and their families) when 'the end of life' is approaching. And for those happier times, a great sense of humour.

## **Volunteers**

We have many unsung heroes in our story this year, those who have gone above and beyond what anyone would expect. Some, even unexpected, who are not 'officially' volunteers but those who are members that have supported each other through a difficult time, who

have taken the time to stay in touch with those who needed that extra support and shown such devotion to their peers.

Volunteers, John Mellor, Ann Routledge (who is now back on reception) and Pauline Nolan, who have devoted hours and hours of their time telephone befriending our members. John ensuring that our Ripon Vision Support Group members received regular calls, offering emotional support and friendship. Ann, who continued her volunteer role working two days a week swapping her reception duties to calling members who would usually attend classes and activities at the Vision Support Centre and Pauline, who continued to call her members on a weekly basis to ensure they always had an opportunity to talk things through. **Between them they made 1325 support calls to members.**

Numerous other volunteers offered their support to members during the pandemic by delivering essentials, wool for knitting and Christmas gifts. Also contributing to the monthly newsletter and generally offering their support during this difficult year. We can never thank you enough for being there when your help was needed the most.

### **John Mellor, Ripon Vision Support Group**

Sadly, in the period March 2020 to September 2021 the Ripon Vision Group (RVSG) had no meeting. The impact of Covid might be considered to be less in Ripon relative to more crowded urban situations. The reality was that, for the age-group of our Members (well above 80), Covid has been a constant shadow resulting in attitudes of extreme caution. Consequently, at no time was it judged wise to reopen meetings. A further factor in making the decision was the inability to meet in the Care Home, which for many years had given us a very admired high level of care and attention. This Care Home, in common with so many in the UK had 8 deaths due to Covid. It was suspected that the cause was the discharge from hospital of a person, who developed Covid and

consequently provoked further cases of Covid. Understandably the Care Home had a firm policy of not receiving Visitors. The knowledge of the episode was a significant factor in increasing our cautious attitude. A further distressing factor influencing our attitude was the knowledge that one of our sightless Members was confined to his room for many months, unable even to exercise in the garden of his Care Home. It is therefore without apology, we note 2020/2021 was a sad year, but one in which contacts were retained and news shared.

The Members of RVSG were delighted to receive regular news from VSHD and, at times permitted by Covid, accompanied by much wearing of masks, the Visitors organised by Tanya and her Team. In this year, these visits and the sense of being in contact with the outside world were much appreciated.

Thank you to all the Members of the Team.

Despite the lack of meetings, Ripon has not been inactive. Members initially received phone calls once a week, permitting the shock of Covid and the utterly new circumstances of a lockdown to be diluted by an exchange of news and the feeling of a problem shared. As the months went by there were two changes. The phone calls were reduced to maybe one per fortnight. The other was the beginning of discussions of what do we do next. So the rest of this report is divided into the period of 2020 when our focus was supporting each other and the period in 2021 when the focus turned to discussions about future activities.

The period of supporting each other was reflective about our stages in life. Attending regular weekly meetings provides an impetus to continue. The Ripon Group rejoiced in having Members who had held Membership for many years.

Even on a cold winter morning the attraction of the fellowship and entertainment stilled all questions of should I go. However, once it became apparent that Covid was with us for many months, if not many

years, or as *observed* likely today, permanently, new questions began to form. They were not of the form do I want to go, but instead, is it time that I stopped going.

Telephone calls often had reviews of medical conditions, leading to the observation, 'I am not sure that I should be up to going in the future.' The responsibilities held by Members could be viewed in the context of seeing a time-line of before Covid on one side and post Covid on the other side.

For some the decision of whether to continue or not was taken from them. Very sadly, we report the death of Raymond Smith, a long-standing, faithful and much-loved Member. Happily, his death came suddenly and he was out and about until close to his end. He had a weekly appointment with another of our Members who is unable to read a newspaper because of sight-issues. Their discussions were based on a mixture of news items of the day, heavily diluted by reminiscing about the past. A second death was that of Tony Teasdale, another faithful Member. His widow, soon after left Ripon to live with family elsewhere. We recognise that other Members struggle more with their health and although decisions might not yet have been made, when we commence again, we will have lost more cherished active Members.

Three Members have had a crucial role over many years. Doreen Flockton has been our Treasurer for so many years, we have lost count when she commenced. Our financial fortunes are small by comparison with the national debt but Doreen has safely seen us through untroubled times and more recent Covid times, where our bank threatened to close our account because of inactivity. So a big thank you to Doreen.

May Livingston and Joan Thompson together with Doreen have also carried out the important business of preparing tea and coffee and ensuring that each table had a fair share of chocolate biscuits. Again, a big thank you.

And so to 2022 with Covid a worry, but plans all made to have a new home on Tuesday mornings at Allhallowgate Methodist Church. We look

forward to a future in a new venue, conveniently placed close to the bus station and we thank the Church for giving us a lovely welcome. Ripon Vision Support Group looks forward to many more years.

### **Ann Routledge, Vision Support Advisor, Volunteer**

This year has been a very strange one for everybody & not least for our members. My contribution to the Society keeping in touch with all our members was to telephone befriend our members who in normal times would be coming into the Centre.

I found it very interesting & as time went on, I could detect the change it was all having on our members. As we got to know each other better I found that they opened up to me and we did have some very interesting conversations. Some needed more support than others and I found that some members did get quite low. I always tried to end every conversation with a laugh! which was hard at times.

It was hard in that a few of the people I was calling passed away & it was sometimes the only way we found out as the relative broke the news to me, we were then able to offer the family support and a listening ear.

In a way I suppose the experience of having all these conversations helped me, for two full days every week I was fully concentrating on other people & how they were feeling.

### **Special thanks**

Our special thanks to Sara Horbury who very kindly continues to help with the organization of our finances and to David Pullman, our Independent Examiner, for all his efforts over several years on often complex issues and for so generously giving his time free.

### **Supporters**

Vision Support Harrogate District relies on the generosity of individuals and groups from our local community. We are a very busy charity supporting a large audience of visually impaired people, through early

diagnosis to supporting people in their own homes. We could not do this without the support of legacies from our friends who have sadly passed and donations in Memoria from friends and family members. We couldn't do it without the wonderful support of local businesses displaying our charity boxes, and other groups who raise money for us, the public, our members through regular giving and home collection boxes, their families, volunteers and many of the churches who run coffee mornings and kindly donate money to Vision Support. We thank you for your generosity and support.

### **Vision Support Face masks**

With kind donations from our friends at **Harrogate Masonic Spa Lodge, Yorkshire & West Riding Masonic Charities Fund** and Vision Support Volunteers we were able to provide reusable Vision Support Face Masks to all our members, this enabled them to be visible as visually impaired people when out and about in the community, helping others recognise their sight loss and be more understanding of their challenges and inability to social distance. We hope these masks helped our members feel more confident whilst out and about.



### **Raworths**

Our special thanks go to our wonderful friends at Raworth's LLP, who have done and continue to do an incredible job of supporting our charity over the past year. We had so many plans to celebrate our Centenary, which disappointingly, all had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, yet

Raworths continued to support us despite having a difficult year themselves, with everyone working from home.

We thoroughly enjoyed a virtual fundraising quiz hosted by Katie and her husband. The whole team at Raworths supported our Christmas delivery project, donating lots of goodies, which were sent out as Christmas gifts to all our home visited members. We were also delighted and grateful to receive a substantial Christmas donation made to our charity to support the vital work we do. This helped us fund the extra support and newsletters we provided to our members.

Team Raworths also donned their trainers for us challenging themselves in the Virtual Great North Run.



Members enjoyed being involved in the Raworth's Christmas bauble appeal by sending in photographs which then appeared on baubles and hung from a Christmas tree in their reception alongside Raworths staff baubles.

### **Rotary Club of Harrogate**

We would also like to give special thanks to the Rotary Club of Harrogate for their kindness in helping deliver Christmas gifts to our most vulnerable members.

## Covid Funding

**Independent Age** supported Vision Support during the pandemic with a grant which enabled us to provide an additional 2 days of service a week to support our most vulnerable older members. We give our sincere thanks to them for recognizing the needs of our members and supporting us in our work.

**The National Lottery** provided Vision Support with a grant to support our work with new and existing members, their contribution was invaluable and enabled us to provide an additional 3 days of support to our Vision Support Services.

**Two Ridings Community Fund** supported Vision Support during the pandemic with a grant enabling us to purchase equipment for our home visitors to be able to work from home. We are very grateful for their support and contribution to our charity work.



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## **Contact us**

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