

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH

The Trustees' most recent and valued donation of £1,000 has enabled our staff and volunteers to touch the lives of many vulnerable adults living with dual sensory loss – whether they faced an urgent need, requiring an urgent solution, or needed a holistic approach of care to improve an aspect of their life. We are extremely grateful for your help in maintaining our support in North and North East Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire.

We pride ourselves in keeping our donors in touch with the difference you are making within the deafblind communities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. I hope you enjoy this short report. Thank you.

Living with deafblindness

Deafblindness can be an incredibly cruel disability, leaving a person to cope in a dark and silent world, or at the very least, live a blurred and muffled existence where loneliness and loss of independence can happen far too quickly. People are living longer and age-related deafblindness is growing.



With your help, Deafblind UK enables those living with combined sight and hearing loss to enhance their quality of life, prolong their independence and embrace as many new opportunities as possible.

Membership of Deafblind UK is free and lasts a life time. As one of our members, you have immediate access to services which aim to make life better in every way possible, such as:

Our Information and Advice Team are a life line for many, especially in an emergency situation, or when people are struggling and just need a friendly voice to talk to.

It is also good to hear that through our **Volunteering Programme**, Ken now has someone to talk to about the things he enjoys. Ken told us: *“The support has made a big difference to me”*.

Our **Outreach Officers** build confidence and trust with deafblind people. They are able to offer a depth and quality of care that we are extremely proud of and can make good things happen very quickly. When Margaret, a new member, was visited for the first time, it was clear that her kitchen was not meeting her sensory and physical needs. Our Officer was able to arrange for a visit from Margaret's local council, and a new kitchen with adaptations is underway.





The majority of our members acquired their sight and hearing loss in later life. We visited **Bob** recently and he told us that when his sight deteriorated due to macular degeneration, he was no longer able to read his newspaper, watch the TV and, devastatingly for Bob, he lost his independence too as he could no longer drive. His world had turned upside down.

Things are much better for Bob now. With our help, he has learnt new skills to help him at home and when out and about, and he is now an active member of one of our **Deafblind Support**

Groups. Bob also represents our charity at various events.

The impact of your gift

Thank you so much for your gift in support of our services across the North and North East Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire. Your donation is enabling our Information and Advice Team to maintain regular contact with nearly 60 members and their families. They contact as many members as possible on their birthdays and always send tactile birthday cards (sometimes the only ones our members receive). Most members receive our members' magazine in a reading format of their choice and we continue to reduce isolation and exclusion through invaluable companionship from trained volunteers.

Here are just a few examples of how we are supporting these members through our Information and Advice Service, Advocacy Service and our Deafblind Support Group in Grimsby:

Heather is registered both deaf and blind. Anna, our Manager for Volunteering Programmes, visited Heather at home to talk about finding a home companion for her. Heather has been a member for seven years now and is looking forward to being paired with a volunteer and the chance to get out and about more often.

Auntie Lol from Cleethorpes will be celebrating her 100th birthday in February! Seen here in the centre of photo, she has been a member of Deafblind UK for nine years and never misses a meeting of her beloved Grimsby Deafblind Group. Auntie Lol also looks forward to her weekly visits from one of our volunteer home companions.

Our Group Co-ordinator, Linda, has been working on the paperwork needed for Auntie Lol to receive a surprise telegram from the Queen. There will definitely be a party at the Grimsby Deafblind Group in February!

Helen is 84 and comes from Immingham. Helen is hard of hearing with very little sight. We have been able to match her with one of our volunteer companions for company at home and to guide Helen so she can do her shopping and pay bills.



We have also been able to help **Joan** recently. She asked for help in re-applying for her Blue Badge permit. Joan found the forms too difficult to read, let alone understand, so we helped her through the process.

Alison is of working age and is deaf. She uses British Sign Language (BSL). Alison has asked us to find her a volunteer companion who is also a BSL user. We hope to be able to match Alison with a suitable volunteer very soon.

Deafblind Support Groups:

Our Grimsby LookHear Group, celebrated 15 years of providing a meeting place for adults with sight and hearing loss. The Trustees of Help for Health are helping us support this group.



Some 'members' couldn't cope with all the excitement...



The difference you are making

We are immensely proud to tell you that we are one of the oldest deafblind charities in the world with a determination to improve the difficult lives of people with varying degrees of deafblindness.

This would be impossible without your continued support. Thank you Mr Mould!

Monica, 29 January 2015