

213th Annual Report 2018-2019



Living life with sight loss

Vision Norfolk is the brand name of Norfolk
and Norwich Association for the Blind

visionnorfolk.org.uk

You may know us as Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind, but we are now **Vision Norfolk**

Who we are, what we do

We support people with sight loss in
three different ways...



1 We provide safe, homely accommodation and care for people who need support to live independently. At our centre in Norwich we provide a home for 35 elderly residents who require additional support due to their sight loss to enjoy fulfilled lives. We also have an additional 20 supported homes for people of all ages who need some assistance to continue to remain active and independent.

2 We empower people with sight loss to continue with everyday life through a range of supported social, leisure and educational activities.

People with sight loss often feel socially isolated, lonely and vulnerable and require support to access local services, go about daily tasks or engage socially. We provide supported activities such as sports, social events, leisure plus a befriending programme delivered by our staff and trained volunteers. These activities are provided in a range of settings and locations, including group, one-to-one and telephone contact.

3 We support those with sight loss through our visiting community workers and services within eye clinics to adapt and live independent and fulfilled lives.

As with everyone, people with sight loss are individuals and their journeys are unique. From diagnosis, we provide lifelong support from early years through our Young Eyes programme to our senior clients by providing guidance, care and enablement. Our services within the eye clinics at the four Norfolk hospitals, along with our community workers who work alongside our clients, ensures lifelong support for people who need it.

Our expertise in supporting people with sight loss comes from our 213 year history through to our trained staff and volunteers who our clients entrust in enabling their everyday lives.

Vision Norfolk is a Norfolk charity which understands local need and provides services throughout the county.

Vision Norfolk's chief executive Gina Dormer and her dog, Betty

The charity has overcome many challenges over recent years and looks ahead to the future with enthusiasm and hope.

A highlight this year has been the 'Good' Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating received in February, a direct result of staff commitment and extremely hard work to ensure each of our residents receives an excellent level of care and support. It was wonderful to welcome the CQC back and we had ample opportunities to demonstrate the many and varied improvements we have made across the board; our final inspection report is testament to this. Our much improved rating means we have been able to receive residents, staff and visitors to the home with a new ethos, culture and enthusiasm.

Towards the end of the financial year, and after much consultation with our service users, stakeholders, staff and volunteers we started to introduce our new name, Vision Norfolk, along with our associated branding. Some people told us, especially those newly diagnosed with sight loss, they had been fearful of being referred to a charity for 'blind people' as they do not

regard themselves as blind. This may be at a time when they need our support most and it was clear a change was needed. We are resolute in our aim that no-one should face sight loss alone and we want to ensure we reach as many people as possible. We believe our new brand will help us to do this. Our regular residents meetings, service user groups and consultations are an indication of the culture we will build within the organisation. We will continue on a path of listening and learning, providing more services to more people, to an even higher standard. We are an organisation which wishes to enable clients and improve quality of life.

A key highlight for me is the moment when we say thank you to volunteers at our annual celebration event. Volunteers are some of the true heroes in our story and each brings a different skill and experience. Looking ahead we must work with determination and passion, and never stop reminding ourselves of that which brings us together – a desire to ensure everyone with sight loss in Norfolk is able to lead an active, independent and fulfilled life.

Gina Dormer, chief executive

Chief executive's view

From NNAB to Vision Norfolk

– an exciting future

It has been an outstanding year of progress in many different ways in 2018/19 with one of the most notable achievements being the incredible turnaround at Thomas Tawell House, which was recognised by CQC when it awarded the home a 'Good' rating in February.

In less than a year, the staff, volunteers, friends and families have worked hard to make sure the residents are provided with the care and support that they deserve. We are immensely proud of this achievement and are now working hard

to maintain the momentum and work towards achieving an outstanding level of care in the future.

We know how much technology can support and improve the lives of people with sight loss. Both of us, as visually impaired people, have found it invaluable in ensuring we can continue our busy lives.

As trustees, we have been eager to see Vision Norfolk embrace technology to support people with sight loss as well as to enable the organisation to build its capacity to support more people across Norfolk.

Earlier in the year, we were very fortunate

to receive a donation from Mr Bob Oldershaw, who has been volunteering with us for 25 years. His donation meant that we are able to provide smart speakers to every resident in Thomas Tawell House.

The residents are now able to keep up-to-date with world events, listen to music, find out what's on locally, what the weather is like and listen to audio books and podcasts – without needing the support of any staff or volunteer. This was a fantastic example of how technology can help to solve some social issues.

We were also fortunate in the year to be awarded a grant of £95k from the National Lottery Community Fund in support of our programme to develop an app that links local volunteers with visually impaired people. This app will be unique at its launch and we are looking forward to unveiling it at the end of the year.

Over the last year, the trustees have been increasingly aware of the need to review our governing documents to reflect today's legal and social expectations. Currently the trustees are exploring moving the association to become a limited charity. This will allow us to secure

our assets for the future, minimise the risks associated with the current governing documents and to move forward to help us to become more appealing when we are recruiting new trustees.

Undoubtedly you will have noticed that we have started introducing our new name – Vision Norfolk – and associated branding, complete with a new logo. This is being developed in parallel with the changes proposed to move towards a limited charity with the view that we can then officially use the name and fully embrace the exciting future for the organisation – 'Living life with sight loss'.

We look back on the year with pride, relief and take from it energy to embrace the future. We are also tremendously thankful to our supporters, volunteers, friends, staff and all those living with sight loss in Norfolk for trusting in the charity that enables us to provide the support for people to continue to live active, independent and fulfilled lives. ■

**The Revd. Canon Simon Stokes
and Richard Hanson,
co-chairs and trustees**

Looking to the future

Care at every stage of life

At Thomas Tawell House we pride ourselves on being able to provide individual care for our residents to maintain active and fulfilled lives. **This year:**

- We celebrated the achievement of our 'Good' rating from CQC
- We celebrated resident, Doris' 105th year with a party at Thomas Tawell House marked with well wishes from the Queen

We are unwavering in our aim to enable people with sight loss to receive the support they require to enjoy active, independent and fulfilled lives. This is at the heart of all of our thinking and guides us through all of our decisions, development and growth.

Research tells us that there are more than 35,000 people living with some degree of sight loss in Norfolk and this is predicted to grow significantly as the population ages. This means our services and support will be increasingly needed as we look to the future. We must also ensure that our charity is secure and sustainable so it can continue to meet the needs of people with sight loss, long into the future.

Our values of being open, respectful, professional, enabling, positive and responsive will resonate throughout our work along with putting people with sight loss at the centre of all the decision and activities of the organisation. These will be the underlying principles that will guide us to 2025.

In order to meet these challenges by 2025 we will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and organise the business of the charity that meets the needs of our clients, our advocates and supporters, along with the expectations of the general public. This will mean that we have three business pillars within the organisation:

- a. Community services** - all our charitable work
- b. Care and support services** - all commercial care and support provision
- c. Property services** - all our assets, their maintenance and development

Thomas Tawell House, rated 'Good' by the CQC, provides a fully supported environment for its residents



Our strategy to 2025 –
'Living life with sight loss'

Hammond Court resident
Alan Harraton in the
tranquil garden

'A home
from home'

A supportive environment

Set in beautifully maintained grounds and with a tranquil garden area, the team at Hammond Court provides an individual level of care to meet its residents' needs. **In 2019, we have worked towards:**

- The introduction of a new application process and criteria with a new panel of advisers convened to assess applications
- Managed a waiting list for a place at Hammond Court, now assessed through the new criteria
- Held regular residents meetings and implemented activity plans

Vision Norfolk provides support for those living with visual impairment at every stage of life, and Hammond Court enables a number of individuals to live independently with warden assistance to ensure their wellbeing at all times. Alan Harraton moved to Hammond Court in January 2019 after a stroke to the eye. Here he talks about his experience of life at Hammond Court.

'Living for several years in a one-room, furnished bedsit, in 2005 I suffered a stroke to the eye and was told I would never see out of my left eye again. In 2007, I was registered visually impaired/partially sighted. I had to get used to having sight loss, coping the best I could and coming to Vision Norfolk's weekly crafts and sports activities, but still living where I was.

'It was not until I had a short stay in hospital in December 2018, unable to go back to my old place, that I was approached in hospital by my support worker who suggested I come and live at Hammond Court. I said yes and she, along with others, made the move happen, for which I'm eternally grateful. It makes all the difference being with people who understand your situation and who are in the same boat with sight loss. Everyone at Vision Norfolk is so kind and helpful. Nothing is too much trouble and it's like being part of one big, happy family. All for one, and one for all.' ■

'See what you can achieve'

Hammond Court is home to a small, vibrant community of tenants with visual impairment and its team are able to tailor their support to each client's individual needs.

Kate Pentney has lived at Hammond Court since 1988 and enjoys living independently with daily support from the housing team. "I was born blind in Norfolk and my mum taught me how to get along by feeling," says Kate. "I was sent to boarding school at the age of three and it was there that I learnt the skills which have enabled me to lead an independent life.

"When I came to Hammond Court, it was a new building and it took me some time to adjust but it feels lovely living here and I enjoy being able to come and go as I like. The wardens are brilliant and I like to spend time sitting in the gardens

and chatting with people. I do my own shopping and cooking and particularly enjoy making cakes. It's nice to spend time with other tenants and a small group of us organise a Friday film night where we each bring food to share.

"I also enjoy doing crafts on a Thursday – we've just started doing leatherwork and I love the smell of the material as we make things. I also enjoy going out and about, and we have short walks each month with volunteer guides, covering a couple of miles and we enjoy a lunch. Vision Norfolk gives me the support I need to live my life and I've tried many experiences over the years, including riding a tandem bicycle and having a go at 4x4 off-road driving.

"Hammond Court has been a life changer for me and living here gives my family great peace of mind, knowing I am safe. It offers the freedom of being independent and having your own front door with support whenever you need it.

"Life has been happy and it's good living here – to anyone thinking about coming here, I would say, don't be hesitant, have a go and see what you can achieve." ■

Kate Pentney has lived at Hammond Court for 31 years



Terry O'Leary is passionate
about improving accessibility



'We want to
raise awareness'

Living independently

Working across and for Norfolk

Vision Norfolk works hard to ensure visually impaired people have the support they wish to receive.

In 2019, we have:

- Supported 1,102 people to live independently through one-to-one assistance at home totalling 39,272 miles travelled and 2,425 visits
- A team of ten volunteers – all of whom have direct experience of sight loss – provide weekly telefriends calls to 70 clients

With a plan to retire to Norwich, Terry O'Leary and his wife Christina's lives were turned upside down when he suffered a stroke three years ago which severely impaired his sight.

Vision Norfolk is one of the organisations which has helped him rebuild his life, maintain a level of independence and to get around the city. He enjoys many of the activities and walks it organises. "Vision Norfolk has a role that is different to RNIB and the Guide Dogs," says Terry. "I enjoy meeting people here and chatting about our shared experience of sight loss. I also like to get involved in the discussion group, monthly audio book club and we've enjoyed days out."

Terry chooses to walk with a cane to help him get around and raise awareness of his limited sight. "My peripheral vision is severely affected but to the outside world I look normal, so with my cane I feel like I've got a suit of armour as it helps to create a safe space around me. One problem is the council has a policy of shared space and has taken away traffic lights, which makes it difficult to get around. Businesses have a part to play too and I've been involved in a campaign against A-frames which are hazardous for those with visual impairment.

"Collectively, sight loss charities represent only ten per cent of those with visual impairment in Norfolk and we want to support more people, particularly young people looking for employment, training and social support, to see that Vision Norfolk can help them to live independently." ■



Assistive
technology
helps
to make life
easier for Scott
Vallance

'Everything
I need'

Scott Vallance is an active member of Norfolk's visually impaired community and has been involved with Vision Norfolk for a number of years. He helped to co-found its choir and in 2018 participated in Run Norwich on behalf of the charity. He regularly uses Vision Norfolk's Norwich equipment centre.

"My relationship with Vision Norfolk comes and goes – they know me, I know them and when I need something they have it!", says Scott. "I've had glasses, lamps, talking watches, canes and computer classes over the years – 20 years ago I didn't have the confidence to use computers and smartphones, but thanks to Vision Norfolk I do and now I wouldn't be without them.

"I'm not brilliant at technology but if I have a problem, I know I can pop in and see someone. Technology moves on and sometimes people use the same equipment for years, but Vision Norfolk can offer something new that can be life-changing – GPS, for example, makes getting around so much easier. Whether your problem is newly diagnosed or long-term you should talk to the equipment centre as they can change your life for the better.

"It's more than just the equipment though, everyone is so friendly and it's great to see the guys and have a cup of tea. I run Guide Dogs Norwich and volunteer for the RNIB and I always recommend Vision Norfolk to the people I meet, as you can turn to them for so many things. It's great to have them on our doorstep." ■

Making a difference

Along with clever inventions and new technologies, Vision Norfolk's equipment centres provide life-saving resources for those living with visual impairment.

This year, the centres have:

- Received 4,790 visits including attendance at coffee and social mornings
- Made a successful move to Dundee Court, Hamburg Way, King's Lynn, a more suitable building for visitors and displaying equipment
- Sold 3,351 items with the most popular being 'bump-ons' (little sticky 'bumps' to help identify various items)

Out and about

Helping visually impaired people to be active is one of Vision Norfolk's key goals.

This year, we have:

- Delivered 15 different activities throughout the year – including yoga – attracting 154 attendees
- Seen the launch of a choir in partnership with RNIB
- Held 80 audio book club meetings across the county with more than 50 people attending
- Organised heritage group visits and photography group sessions
- Organised a Sensory Garden at the Royal Norfolk Show to illustrate how certain plants can appeal to visually impaired gardeners

One of Vision Norfolk's key objectives is to help those living with sight loss to lead independent and fulfilled lives, so when Angelique Weatherby decided to retrain as a yoga teacher after experiencing sight loss in adult life, the charity supported her.

Born with stickler syndrome, a hereditary eye condition where the retina detaches, and an aggressive glaucoma, Angelique had her own interior design business when she lost her eyesight. "The sight in my right eye went overnight," says Angelique. "It meant I lost my driving licence and had to close my shop, and it was a profound moment when I was registered partially sighted."

"It was my daughter Emily who discovered NNAB, as it was, and encouraged me to get involved. I tried tandem cycling, sailing and tennis and rediscovered a sense of freedom, finally I didn't feel so isolated. The activities helped me rethink my working life too. I've been doing yoga for 30 years and Vision Norfolk's team encouraged me to retrain as a teacher."

After a year at college, Angelique qualified and now leads weekly yoga classes for visually impaired people at Vision Norfolk "My students love the classes," she says. "Many say they feel happier, confident and stronger. Bizarrely, sight loss has opened another door for me – just because you lose your sight doesn't mean life comes to an end. If it hadn't been for Vision Norfolk, I wouldn't be embarking on the next chapter of my life." ■



Angelique Weatherby qualified as a yoga teacher with support from Vision Norfolk

Rhiannon (right) and Teresa Kay enjoy a Rainbow Sparks music and play session



'She surprises me every day'

One of Vision Norfolk's youngest service users is Rhiannon Kay who was born with a rare eye condition, aniridia, where the iris is either missing or underdeveloped. Now two, she has also developed cataracts and her condition must be carefully monitored but, like any toddler, she loves to play and sing.

Part of Vision Norfolk's Young Eyes activities, Rainbow Sparks offers Rhiannon and her mum Teresa an opportunity to spend quality time together and to meet other families whose children have visual impairment. "Young Eyes has been a life-saver and we have made some fantastic friends," says Teresa. "We've been coming to Rainbow Sparks since Rhiannon was three months and she absolutely loves the music sessions. We've also enjoyed Easter and Christmas parties, boat trips and days out with Vision Norfolk."

Rhiannon's parents have undertaken several challenges during the year which has raised significant funds for Vision Norfolk to help support the charity further.

"It's difficult to know how Rhiannon's vision will develop," says Teresa. "She is registered partially sighted and struggles with depth perception, steps are particularly challenging for her, but she is happy and we feel very positive about the future. I know that Vision Norfolk will help to support her needs as she grows." ■

Celebrating young lives

For young people with visual impairment, Vision Norfolk can help to ensure that they have the best start in life.

This year, we have:

- Provided activities and support to 45 families
- The Young Eyes group has enjoyed beat boxing and body percussion, danced with the Norwich Samba Band, met the Happisburgh Owls, visited the theatre and Waveney Stardust Wherry
- Our under 5s Rainbow Sparks group enjoyed Musical Keys' monthly activities and visited the Waveney Stardust Wherry
- All our young people enjoyed a Santa train ride and Christmas party

Building connections

Vision Norfolk can provide a wide range of practical and social support for those affected by sight loss and create links with the wider community. **Last year, we:**

- Trained almost 100 people across the county to create a deeper understanding of sight loss and how to support people living with visual impairment
- Organised the **Seeing Things** exhibition at the Forum, Norwich to help raise awareness of Charles Bonnet Syndrome

Across the county, Vision Norfolk has an expert team working to provide support for those living with visual impairment. External services manager, **Kim Horspole** is charged with managing its community workers, hospital and equipment centre staff. A new role, **Kim has been in post since May 2019, having previously worked as an optician and low vision specialist.**

"Our community workers support clients at home whose needs are diverse, helping them to complete forms, organising equipment or putting them in touch with other services and activities at Vision Norfolk.

"I manage our eye care liaison team at Norfolk's hospitals who can provide a support between medical staff and patients. We support and point people towards information and services including Vision Norfolk's resources. I also co-ordinate staff at our equipment centres who are very knowledgeable and assist our clients to make informed choices which are appropriate to their individual needs. My role is to ensure everything runs smoothly."

Predominantly based at the new West Norfolk Equipment and Information Centre, Kim's role will play a major part in increasing the number of people the charity supports. "We help around 3,500 clients but there are 30,000 visually impaired people in Norfolk," she says. "We want to reach younger people and those of working age and our new identity, Vision Norfolk, is more representative of the services we offer to empower clients to live life fully, achieve their ambitions and be part of the wider community." ■

Kim Horspole at Vision Norfolk's
West Norfolk Equipment and
Information Centre



Support from Vision Norfolk's eye clinic has helped Brian Moore to continue working life

'The reason I'm here today'

For eye clinic liaison officer Rosie Knell, there's nothing more satisfying than helping a client regain their confidence. "I mainly work with people who need support after seeing their consultant, perhaps after some unexpected news, and my role is to bring in some outside help and guidance. Vision Norfolk has the ability to provide social support, equipment and to tailor services to each individual patient's needs to live life fully and as independently as possible after diagnosis."

One of Rosie's clients is Brian Moore who was registered sight impaired in 2014 and recommended to the eye clinic by a specialist. "Initially Brian was reluctant and feeling low," adds Rosie, "but his wife told me he was having some workplace issues which we worked together to help him overcome. He is now passionate about supporting others through access to work and since then we have been able to provide him with equipment to help him in his efforts."

"Rosie is brilliant," says Brian. "Ever since my wife and I first met her she has been a support and helps me to keep going. She always makes things happen for me and when a large screen was donated, she thought of me and went to great lengths to ensure I received it, which has made reading and filling in forms so much easier. Thanks to Rosie, things have improved significantly for me and I can't praise her enough. Vision Norfolk has made a huge difference to my life and I will always be grateful that they were there at that moment that I needed them." ■

A vital link

While diagnosis and treatment may tackle the physical symptoms of visual impairment, the practical and emotional effects can be tough. Vision Norfolk's eye clinic team provides help for patients to access resources. **This year:**

- Nine volunteers continued to provide support to people at eye clinics across the county, namely Ruth Blewitt and Vera Hodson at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital; Angie Urwin and Sue Fern at Queen Elizabeth Hospital; Willma Owen and Nick Turner at Cromer Hospital; and Chris Stanley at James Paget University Hospital; supported by staff members Rosemary Knell and June Mills

Growing support

Volunteers are the lifeblood of a charity and we are fortunate to be supported by so many people from a wide spectrum of backgrounds. **This year, together we achieved:**

- An annual volunteers appreciation party where the charity gave thanks and celebrated the work of its volunteers
- The appointment of two new volunteer engagement co-ordinators – Rachael Green for Norwich and East Norfolk, and Penny Parker for West Norfolk

Many of the people who work at Vision Norfolk are visually impaired themselves, and often those who discover its services for the first time remark how important it is to be able to talk with someone who understands their own experience.

In 2019, Penny Parker joined Vision Norfolk's West Norfolk office as a volunteer engagement co-ordinator, a new role to extend the charity's reach and grow the number of people providing support in this region of the county.

Penny has retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic disorder which affects night and peripheral vision. She uses a cane and has a guide dog. "I started to lose my sight about 24 years ago and was introduced to the charity. I've kept in touch over the years and when this opportunity came up, I jumped at the chance to develop a local base of volunteers. I also spend time meeting with local organisations, other charities and job centres to raise awareness.

"People volunteer for a variety of reasons – some to develop confidence, others to work towards employment – and I want to create a good base for volunteers to receive training and feel appreciated. We are growing the range of activities we can offer as our numbers grow and whether it's driving, supporting us administratively or manning a stand, we need more people to help us. It's an exciting time in the West and anyone who would like to volunteer is welcome to get involved." ■

Penny Parker is working to grow Vision Norfolk's volunteers in the West



'An exciting time'



A Royal occasion

When Her Majesty The Queen and other members of the Royal Family hosted a celebration of 100 years of voluntary action with members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations at Windsor Castle earlier this year, Alice and Maurice Lince were asked to represent Vision Norfolk.

Like many others, the couple give their time on a weekly basis to support individuals and activities. "I first heard about NNAB, as it was, at a Women's Institute talk," says Alice. "Having worked in the health service, when I retired I applied as a volunteer and was involved in monthly reminisces at Thomas Tawell House and helped in the equipment centre. Now I help with their children's activities, trips out, craft sessions and events."

Maurice decided to get involved too about 18 months ago as a visitor for several residents at Thomas Tawell House. "I love to chat with them," says Maurice. "We have a cup of tea and natter about all sorts of things - from football to their life experiences, they are fascinating

people. At a recent event, one individual's relatives told me how much my visits mean to their relative, but the pleasure is all mine."

The Windsor Castle trip was unexpected for the couple, but created a wonderful memory they both cherish. "It was an incredible experience," says Maurice. "Her Majesty The Queen's own piper marked our arrival as we arrived for a Champagne reception with around 300 people and we were ushered into St George's Hall. There were several members of the Royal Family, including the Princess Royal and Duke of Gloucester, and the lovely thing was they made us feel like the important ones."

While the visit to Windsor Castle was momentous, for Alice and Maurice the return to Vision Norfolk was just as special, as the charity's team hung out bunting to herald their return. "It was a lovely memory and we thank them for choosing us, but the truth is we love the work we do for Vision Norfolk," says Alice.

"Volunteering is a nice thing to do and if you see something to help with - or even if you don't, ask what you can do - get involved." ■

Fundraising

Amazing achievements

We raised £133,826!

Notable events included:

- The People Kit raised £4,000 at a food quiz
- Nine supporters climbed London's O2 raising £5k
- Ed Bates and Mark Smith with guides Kelvin Colburn and Stuart Kenrick, raised £1,400 at Run Norwich
- Street and store collections raised almost £25,000
- A Golf Day, supported by Barclays, raised £5,455
- £3,807 was raised at Ditchingham and Bishop's Gardens Open Days
- Tim Hirst in his attempt to climb Mount Aconcagua, raised almost £5,000

When it comes to fundraising, Reg Cotton and Stephen Turner are a veritable super-team who have helped to raise more than £80,000 for Vision Norfolk over many years. Both residents at Hammond Court, Reg since 1997 and Stephen since 2000, the duo say they are on a mission to do as much as they can for the charity.

Collections are a key way for Reg and Stephen to generate donations and while many stores permit them to hold Vision Norfolk tins a couple of times a year, they have also held collections at the Lifeboat Centre in Cromer and the Sandringham Flower Festival. "We work as a team," says Stephen, "and although we are increasingly a cashless society, most will donate and chat with us about the charity. Many older folk remember the Blind School, and the fact that we are a Norfolk charity always interests them. It's great to get out and about and meet people."

"It's really enjoyable and we will always do our fundraising," adds Reg. "We've organised coffee mornings, raffles and we were able to buy a new fridge for the communal kitchen at Hammond Court - it makes us feel good to know that we achieved that."

Reg and Stephen's hard work and dedication was recognised at last year's AGM when the pair were presented with a certificate. "It was nice to have our efforts acknowledged," says Stephen. "We both believe life is what you make it and giving back is an important part of that." ■

Reg Cotton (left) and Stephen Turner have raised £80,000 for the charity



'It makes us feel good'

A positive outlook

Despite another financially challenging year in the third sector, our accounts for the year to 31 March 2019 reported an improved performance from the previous year. Our income was 18 per cent higher, while our costs were only nine per cent higher. Our investment portfolio performed well during the year, and our balance sheet remains strong. We continue to exercise strong financial management and as a result we have a solid foundation to see us face the future with confidence.

One of our main sources of income over the years has been legacies, and while we are always extremely grateful to those people who choose to leave their money to our association, we are also acutely aware that this income stream is unpredictable and is not something we can budget for.

With that in mind we are now looking to develop our income generation strategy. This process started during 2018 and continues apace during 2019. Various changes to the association's internal structure and the introduction of new committees is allowing us to focus on aspects of income generation, with the hope of developing those we already have and opening up new areas. Ultimately securing a strong future for the association is our primary aim.

One area that has needed significant financial investment over the last 18 months is Thomas Tawell House. The challenges associated with this have been met head on and, while occupancy levels have remained relatively low, we have a clear strategy in place for our residential care home and are hoping to see increased occupancy and income levels in the future. As always I would like to say a huge thanks to all of the staff and volunteers, their hard work and dedication to the association is fantastic. ■

Andrew Orves, treasurer

PATRON AND PRESIDENTS

Patron

Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

President

The Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Norwich

VICE-PRESIDENTS

The Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk

The Sheriff of Norwich

The High Sheriff of Norfolk

The Mayor of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

The Lord Mayor of Norwich

The Mayor of Great Yarmouth

The Venerable M Handley MA

P Scarfe FCA

Trustee of Real Estate

The Official Custodian for Charities

Auditors

Lovewell Blake

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC

Solicitors

Spire Solicitors

Hon consultant ophthalmologist

N Puvanachandra MB BChir MA FRCOphth

Hon Physician

Dr S Pinto MB BS DCH DRCOG MRCP

Co-chairs

R T Hanson

Canon S Stokes(1)

Vice-chairman

G W B Gowing MRICS

Treasurer

A Orves ACCA ACA BSc (Hons)

Trustees

Miss E Barnston

P Bowerbank

Dr D Goldser

D Harris

Mrs G Holloway

Mrs B Jones (2)

Ms A Lockett

Mrs K Norton

R West MBCS CITP

Chaplain

The Reverend H Wright

Executive staff

Chief executive

Gina Dormer

Director of business development

Clive Evans

Director of corporate services

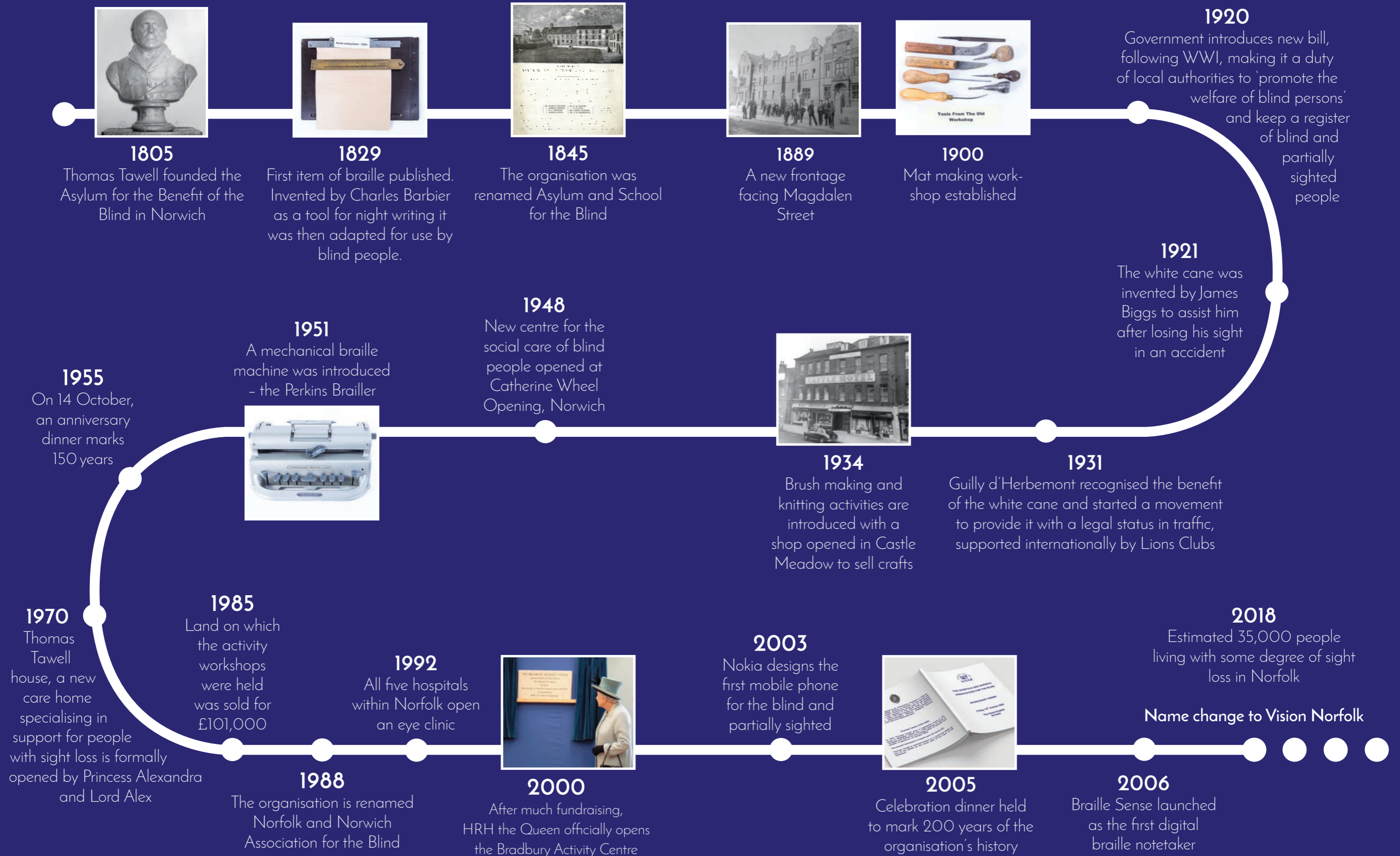
Jelena Sarubina

(1) Appointee of the Lord Bishop of Norwich

(2) Appointee of Norfolk County Council

Vision Norfolk is the brand name of the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind

Our story so far...





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Norwich Centre

Magpie Road, Norwich NR3 1JH
t: 01603 573000

West Norfolk Centre

Unit 3, Dundee Court
Hamburg Way, King's Lynn PE30 2ND
t: 01553 660808

Great Yarmouth Centre

12 Hall Quay
Great Yarmouth NR30 1HP
t: 01493 745973

Registered charity no. 207060

Vision Norfolk is the brand name of Norfolk
and Norwich Association for the Blind