

Vision Norfolk

County Wide Survey - Summary Report

May 2021

Table of Contents

1. Main findings:	3
2. Our survey	5
3. Who responded?	5
4. Main issues faced	6
5. Awareness of Vision Norfolk and its services	7
5.1 Vision Norfolk	7
5.2 Website and social media	7
5.3 Vision Norfolk services	7
5.4 Vision Norfolk activities	8
6 Future Activities	9
6.1 Current Vision Norfolk services respondents would like to access	9
6.2 Current Vision Norfolk activities respondents would like to access	9
6.3 Suggestions for future activities	9
6.4 Preference for accessing information, advice, support and activities	10
7 Technology	11
7.1 Use of and confidence in using technology	11
7.2 What is technology used for	11
7.3 Learning more about technology	11
7.4 Support for technology that would be useful	12
8 Website and social media	12
9 Summary of comments received	13
9.1 Issues and Barriers	13
9.2 Comments on current services and activities	14
9.3 Suggestions made	14
9.4 User Group responses	14

1. Main findings:

Our survey

This survey, the first of its type, has proved largely successful, providing data from a range of respondents (95), which can be used to develop services and provide evidence for future funding applications. This was Vision Norfolk's first countywide survey and can now form a baseline for future surveys to measure progress. It is, however, recognised that improvements can be made to help improve the response rate and the diversity of respondents, such as reducing and simplifying the questions but also improving how we promote to those with visual impairments. In particular it is noted that we had low response rates from:

- People living in Kings Lynn and Breckland areas
- People of working age, particularly those from 41 -50
- Ethnic Minorities where we only achieved 2% response rate whilst according to Norfolk Insight 2020, 13.6% ethnic minorities make up the Norfolk Population¹.

It is very positive that the 10% of the respondents that were not aware of Vision Norfolk prior to the survey now have information regarding our services and activities. As most awareness of Vision Norfolk was through word of Mouth, SSU or the ECLO, it is clear that more promotion needs to be done with the wider communities across Norfolk.

Access was a main issue. Along with many other services in Norfolk, rural isolation and transport issues are a big problem, but this was really highlighted in the survey, with lack of public transport and cost being barriers. There was also concern that those people who worked could not access any activities, as they were all during working hours.

Additionally, it was clear that the majority of respondents that were aware of services accessed them in Norwich, with low access rates particularly in King's Lynn and Cromer.

Most people were aware of all the services offered, with a high rating for usefulness (675-70%), but with a surprising 14% who did not find the community worker service useful. In the future, it was also interesting to see that 13% confirmed that the community hubs were essential for them, compared to the ECLO service - 2% and community workers - 6%.

Most people were also aware of the sports and social activities, but fewer having knowledge of the Telefrends service (44%). Most people found the activities fun and friendly (58 -72%). There were many suggestions for other activities and this will be valuable for our future planning.

¹ 7.8% are Asian/Asian British, 3.5% Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British, 2.3% Mixed multiple ethnic groups, other ethnic groups 1% - Norfolk Insight

Whilst respondents' preferences on how to access services during COVID-19 were by phone or online, these still appear high preferences after COVID-19, suggesting that telephone and online support and activities will continue to be well received. It should, however, be noted that there was a higher demand for face to face after COVID-19, either in local community venues or in the community hubs.

With regard to the website and social media, fairly low feedback was given on the usefulness of them (1.5% to 17%).

There was high interest in making more information available via social media such as equipment and technology (86%), community activities (82%) and community support (79%) along with links to social services and community support etc (76%) and information on sports and social activities (72%).

A high percentage of respondents said they do not use technology items, ie, smart phone (21%). Where it is used, this is mostly for communication. For those that do use technology there were quite high confidence levels (eg. 75% for smart phones, 59% for tablets), but also there was real interest in learning more (57% for smart phone), with 73% of people wanting more information and advice about features.

2. Our survey

This was the first county wide survey that Vision Norfolk had conducted. Survey Monkey was used for developing the survey which comprised 35 questions covering service awareness and access, future activities, social media and technology. The survey was open for a period of 5 months (1st December 2020 to 4th May 2021). It was promoted through Vision Norfolk social media, the website, newsletters and A6 Cards, given out by ECLO's. Additionally, local community groups and organisations that support those with sight-loss, as well as other generic voluntary and community groups, Sensory Support Unit and Hospitals were contacted and given information about the survey and asked to publicise with their members/clients. Whilst we had hoped for some radio interviews about the survey and specific news articles in local papers, unfortunately this did not happen.

Respondents were offered support in completing the survey either with a large print version or a member of staff supporting them to complete it online. 2 large print copies were issued and 3 people were supported by a Vision Norfolk colleague.

It is hoped that the survey will be repeated on a biannual basis, where improvements will be made to both the survey and the promotion.

3. Who responded?

There were 95 responses in total. 64 were completed by a person with a visual impairment, 31 by a family member or friend.

We achieved a 61% completion rate with the typical time spent being 21.5 mins. The low completion rate was partially due to an option on post COVID-19 services which was not applicable to all and some decided not to complete the technology questions.

Eye condition:	The majority of people had Macular Degeneration (26), then Cataracts (21), congenital vision loss (19), Retinosa Pigmentosa (16) and Glaucoma (15), and then a wide variety of other eye conditions.
Gender:	31% male, 57% female, 1 trans male and 3 preferring not to say.
Registration:	Most were registered as severely sight impaired, 47, with 39 % registered with the local council and 28 having a Certificate of Visual Impairment.
Age:	There was a wide range of ages, although the majority were over 70 (34.78%) and just 16% in the 21-40 age range. The lowest levels of responses were from 18 -20 year olds – 0% - and the 41-50 age range just 8%.
Health & Fitness:	43% had very good or good health, 25 % moderate and 26% not good.
Employment:	48% were unemployed or retired, 22% were working with a visual impairment. 16% preferred not to say.

- Ethnicity:** 95% White, 1% ethnic minority, 1% other ethnic group, 3 % preferred not to say.
- Location:** There was a fairly even spread across the 7 districts of Norfolk, but with a low percentage responding from Breckland (7%) and King's Lynn and West Norfolk (6%) as opposed to 13-17% in other areas.

4. Main issues faced

78 responded.

Transport and location were the main issues faced by respondents, with a lack of information and advice on community support available and the need for advocacy to find specialist organisations very high too. As a sector, all the issues around technology were highlighted as a main issue.

Summary of the responses given:

Technology

Understanding what technology and assistive equipment is available	59.46%
Sourcing and purchasing technology and assistive equipment	58.11%
Training on how to use technology and assistive equipment	58.11%
Ongoing support with technology and assistive equipment	59.72%

Access to services

Appropriate Transport to services	67.13%
Affordability in accessing services	53.30%
Location of Services	64.00%

A lack of Information and Advice

Social, leisure recreational activities	53.33%
Community support	61.34%
Sports activities	47.30%
Finances	38.36%
Care in the home	50.69%
Eye conditions	41.89%

A need for Advocacy

To find specialist organisations to provide services	58.11%
To provide information about options and rights	54.06%
To attend meetings and appointments	40.28%
To provide support for applications	50.00%

Health and Wellbeing

Small social circle	50.69%
Need for support	57.33%
Lack of confidence	53.94%
Communication (telephone, email, social media)	50.69%

5. Awareness of Vision Norfolk and its services

72 respondents

5.1 Vision Norfolk

14% of respondents (10 people) were not aware of Vision Norfolk prior to this survey.

82.54% were aware of the Norwich hub, but only 67 % were aware of Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn hubs. Only 54% were aware of the Cromer service.

58% accessed services in Norwich, while 18% accessed Great Yarmouth, 7% Kings Lynn and 5 % Cromer and 11% accessed through home visits or over the phone.

There were several comments that transport was an issue, saying they would attend if transport was provided or public transport was more accessible.

The majority of people had heard about Vision Norfolk through word of mouth (16 – 22.2%), Sensory Support unit (15 – 20.8%), and Vision Norfolk ECLO's (13 – 18%).

5.2 Website and social media

70 respondents

The Vision Norfolk website is most used (68%) but with only 20% using it sometimes or regularly. 17% felt it was useful/very useful.

Facebook is used by 38 % of respondents, with only 12% using it sometimes or regularly. 15% felt it was useful/very useful.

Twitter appears to have a very small reach with only 15% using it and 6% sometimes. 1.5% felt it was useful/very useful.

5.3 Vision Norfolk services

69-70 respondents

Service	% aware of the service	% accessed the service	Of those that accessed the service		
			% used it regularly or sometimes	% found it very useful or useful	% didn't find it useful
Community Hubs	75	41	33	70	1
Community Workers	65	39	26	68	14
Eye Clinic Service	63	10	6	67	2

5.4 Vision Norfolk activities

67 – 70 Respondents

Activities	% aware of the service	% accessed the service	% interested in accessing in the future
Sports Activities (boccia, darts, walks, yoga, shuffleboard etc)	62	26	45
Social Activities (arts and crafts, theatre, audio book clubs, choir, discussion groups)	65	33	61
Telefriends	44	6	30

Activities	Of those that accessed the service			
	% that used it regularly or sometimes	% that found it		
		'boring'	'fun' and 'friendly'	'interesting' 'motivating' and 'educational'
Sports Activities (boccia, darts, walks, Yoga, shuffleboard etc)	65	5.5	72	22.5
Social Activities (arts and crafts, theatre, audio book clubs, choir, discussion groups)	79	1.5	58.5	40
Telefriends	83	8	58	34

6 Future Activities

6.1 Current Vision Norfolk services respondents would like to access

	might or would access	service is essential for me
Eye Clinic Liaison Support	68%	2%
Community Worker Service	79%	6%
Community Hubs	68%	13%

6.2 Current Vision Norfolk activities respondents would like to access

	might or would access	service is essential for me
Social Activities	65%	10%
Sports Activities	48.38%	10%
Telefriends	46.55%	5%

6.3 Suggestions for future activities

Yoga sessions/ craft workshops
 Shuffleboard
 Ten pin bowling,
 Short mat bowls
 Cycling (side by side tandem)
 Book group, discussion group, social gatherings not during office hours
 Social things that are not 'old fashioned'
 More interactive social events
 More activities for those that are young adults
 Folk music
 Group to discuss experiences after lockdown and lessons learnt.
 Social history walks, guided walks
 Technology zoom voice over
 Seated exercise,
 Exercise
 Help with technology, I phones, software
 Information seminars
 Education of people who deal with VI
 Telephone friends
 Demonstrations or training with accessible technology
 Art
 Trade shows, conferences, demonstrations

6.4 Preference for accessing information, advice, support and activities

During COVID-19

Highest response was Phone Calls - 75.44%, followed by the Website - 67.27%.

Online video calls and social activities online- 54-55%

Use of a community venue for face to face meetings was 53%, and for sports and social was 49%, while using the Vision Norfolk hubs was 43%

Face to face meetings in a library, office or hospital environment ranged from 39% to 31%.

After COVID-19

42% said their responses would be different after COVID-19. These results, therefore, refer only to those that responded to the question for after COVID – which amounts to 23 responses.

Requests for phone service still high at 77% and Website 90%.

There was a much more positive response for sports and social activities and face to face meetings held in the community hubs or community venue all 91%.

However online video calls were still high at 59%, and social activities online were 62%.

There was only a slight increase for face to face meetings in the home, hospital and office environment which ranged from 48% to 32%.

7 Technology

7.1 Use of and confidence in using technology

65 respondents

Most respondents were confident in using smart/mobile phones (75 %), PC's (69%), tablet apps (66%) and tablets (59%).

Fewer respondents were confident in using smart speakers (41%), smart TV (34%) & games console (11%).

It should be noted that there was a high percentage stating that they do not use any of these technology items, ie, smart/mobile phone 21%, tablet 38%, smart speakers 51%.

Other technologies used includes: enhanced vision machine, E reader, Dragon software, Victor Stream, Braille note taker, Zoom, Trecker Breeze, Braille displays, Apple iPad.

7.2 What is technology used for

58 respondents

The most responses given were for using smart phone, PC/ laptop and mobile apps and confirmed the majority used these for communication 100%, 82% and 71.59% respectively, with research, shopping, banking and news coming close after with similar results ranging from 40–60%.

Assistive technology such as face detector, currency counter, light detector, maps etc was not greatly used, but used mostly on smart mobile phones and tablet apps (28%-29%)

Other purposes for which technology was used included: spreadsheets and word processing, audiobooks on the phone, work x 3, taking photos, podcasts, diary, record keeping, journey planning, studying & education.

7.3 Learning more about technology

Interest in learning more: (64 respondents)

Main results: 57% for the smart/mobile phone to 45% for using a PC/laptop.

The lowest result was for the games console where only 17% were interested.

The 3 main uses if respondents learnt more would be: (48 respondents)

Communication (73%) followed by research (65%) and assistive technologies (56%).

Reading, entertainment, news and shopping were also high (between 40 and 46%)

With the lowest use being banking 29% and Games 19%.

Other suggestions included: Sat Nav, processing and filing paperwork, cooking equipment, planning a journey and self-driving cars.

7.4 Support for technology that would be useful

48 respondents

Support that would be useful	Percentage of positive responses
More Information and advice, about features, how to use etc.	73
Training (online, 1:1 or group)	71
Access to ongoing support	60
Peer support group	60
Support to source equipment and purchase	52

8 Website and social media

59 respondents

This table shows which type of information respondents wanted provided on the website and through social media.

Equipment and technology 86%, community activities 82% and community support 79%.

Links provided to social services and community support etc was 76% and information on sports and social activities was 72%.

There was not a high demand for information on residential and support housing which was 28%.

Equipment and technology	86%
Community activities	82%
Community support (neighbourhood groups, etc)	79%
Links to social services, community support, care services etc	76%
Sports and social activities	72%
Eye conditions	64%
Residential and supported housing	28%

9 Summary of comments received

9.1 Issues and Barriers

Transport & Location:

Support is needed in rural areas where isolation is a problem.
 I have no transport and can't use public transport.
 Not realistic from rural North Norfolk.
 Difficulty getting out and about, cannot get into a car.
 Lack of mobility and transport means I cannot access anything outside my home.
 Accessibility is the main problem.
 Cannot access as live in Diss.
 Locations were aren't very accessible by public transport.
 None in my areas.
 Transport makes it difficult.

Timing of Activities:

Something outside office hours.
 Difficulty I have getting involved in services either as a user or volunteer is that most take place during working hours.
 Nothing available for those of us in full-time employment.
 Doesn't really cater for working blind or visually impaired people very well.
 Activities running during the day, so those that are working cannot access them X 2.

Lack of Awareness:

JPH didn't make them aware of the ECLO, Vision Norfolk doesn't have a high profile space.
 Not aware of the ECLO at N&N.
 I would have accessed equipment hub had I known - I thought I needed a blind registration number to do so.

Communication and Social isolation

Frustrated and desperate for social contact.
 Difficult to socialise as profoundly deaf as well.
 Sports activities fun but irregular so difficult to form friendships.
 Support is needed in rural areas where isolation is a problem.

Would love information about services, it's finding the right way of communicating and keeping updated – we're not all great at technology.
 Better Communication of VI people would probably mean they'd be used by people like me more.

Cost

Cost is my main barrier.
 Would love a games console but cannot afford one. (x 2)
 Specialist equipment is ridiculously expensive for what it does.

Technology

Prefer face to face rather than online as I find that very isolating.

There is a great need for learning, especially when your eyesight changes from partially to severely sight impaired.

I would use if I knew how to.

Got Dragon but don't know how to use it.

9.2 Comments on current services and activities

Activities and meeting different people boosted my self-confidence.

Coffee and games morning useful to interact with people and make friends.

Walking with sports coordinator very important in my life.

Community workers helped me no end, someone I trust and will always call/visit when I feel down.

Community workers are very useful, she is fast and efficient. Glad they are there for support.

Disgusted Community workers put on furlough.

Equipment: old man demonstrating equipment seemed grumpy and lacked knowledge.

Much of information is available online for free.

Found them patronising.

9.3 Suggestions made

Peer to peer support: Happy to use and help with as I have learnt a lot.

Website etc : Would like to see more fun stuff, chatterbox, grapevine talking newspapers, A-Z of services, advice about benefits, personal stories, more information that support can be provided to those with sight issue, not only those that are severely sight impaired, stories from local people, events, photos, competitions, booking forms, hints and tricks. Needs to be quickly and easily accessed.

Telefriends should be more often.

Activities needed for **younger adults**.

9.4 User Group responses

8 people have signed up to say they would be interested to be part of a user group (one of which is a member of staff).