



# A POSITIVE IMPACT

*April 2022 - March 2023*



# INTRODUCTION

from Christine Wilmshurst, Chair, and Dame Judi Dench, Patron.

**Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey is a lifeline for people living in Surrey who are blind, vision impaired, Deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing.**

We are here to offer advice and support to people of any age, in Surrey. This may be practical and emotional support from our Eye Clinic Liaison Officers, or help from our Hearing Loss Advisors to provide information on specialist equipment.

The team are here to provide bespoke support to allow people to achieve their individual goals and aspirations, whatever these may be. We provide everything from practical support in the home, with daily living tasks such as chopping vegetables and cooking a roast dinner, through to specialist equipment, and assistance with applying for Welfare Benefits to achieve financial security.

Our wrap-around services allow individuals to get the support they need to achieve their goals and live as independently as they would like.

The difference we make is only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, funders and volunteers.

People with sight and/or hearing loss, and those from the Deaf community, often face more barriers to independence than others.

**We work side by side with the people we support to enable and empower them to overcome barriers and lead full independent lives.**

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported us. Whether you have donated as an individual, left us a legacy in your will, hosted events, supported us through grants, corporate partnerships or volunteering, without your support the service we deliver to the people in Surrey would not be possible, and we look forward to your continued support.

**Thank you.**

Christine Wilmshurst, Chair



Dame Judi Dench, Patron  
Photo by Robert Wilson



**2022 - 2023**

# **HIGHLIGHTS IN NUMBERS**



We helped over **8,000**  
people who are blind,  
vision impaired, Deaf,  
hard of hearing and deafblind  
**20,982** times



There are **4,349**  
people on the statutory  
register for blind and vision  
impaired people in Surrey.



Our Helpdesk  
has taken over  
**14,764** calls  
during the last year.



We issued **3,534**  
pieces of equipment.



**Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey is a charity that supports over 8,000 individual people in Surrey who are blind, vision impaired, Deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing.**

Our aim is to support people to overcome their day-to-day challenges and lead an active, fulfilling and independent life. We are here for those individuals, and their families, providing specialist hands on practical support tailored to their needs.

# VISION IMPAIRED SERVICES

**We are here to support people who are blind or partially sighted with a range of specialist services and support.**

We help right from the outset when people are first diagnosed and provide bespoke support to individuals and their families. Our Sensory Specialist Workers help people with rehabilitation programmes, which can include daily living skills such as using a washing machine, through to learning new routes to be able to travel confidently and independently.

We also work in local hospitals, where our Eye Clinic Liaison Officers (ECLOs), provide those recently diagnosed with an eye condition the practical and emotional support they need to understand their diagnosis. The team expertly guide people through the process of accessing the right support to come to terms with their diagnosis and maximise their independence.

ECLOs also provide essential support to other teams by liaising with patients, hospital staff, and our own sensory



**We helped 318 people with tech support.**



**VI Support Workers delivered 5,244 hours of support.**

specialist workers. At what can be an emotionally traumatic time, the ECLO service provides essential support when it's needed most.

We also provide IT assistance to anyone who is blind or vision impaired, and have a showroom with a large selection of hearing and low vision equipment, with experts to help people find the most useful equipment for their needs. Sight loss can change over time as can technology, gadgets and types of benefits; we keep up to date with all these systems so that we offer the right advice at the right time.





## RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Our Resource Centre, based at our offices in Fetcham, Surrey, is an Aladdin's cave of gadgets, games and equipment all designed to make life as easy as possible for those who are blind, vision impaired, Deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing.

**We have helped over 2,000 people and issued over 3,500 pieces of equipment in the last 12 months.**



## CRAIG'S STORY

**Craig has Retinitis Pigmentosa and Usher's Syndrome. We have supported Craig with a symbol cane, electronic reading machine, technology support and given him benefits advice as Craig was unable to continue working in the plumbing industry when he started losing his sight.**

Craig said, **"The charity has been a great support to me whilst I come to terms with my sight and hearing loss."**

# DEAF SERVICES

Since 2016 we have provided specialist social work services and community support to Deaf adults in Surrey aged 18 years and over.

The Deaf services team is made up of qualified social workers, social care assistants, and community officers. The team work with Deaf individuals, families and carers to help Deaf people access everything they need.

Our team of specialist social workers have detailed knowledge and understanding of Deaf culture, and barriers often experienced by Deaf people. The team have the skills and experience to work with Deaf people using a range of communication methods including British Sign Language.



**Debbie Arnaud has Usher's Syndrome and has been supported by us since 2006.**

Usher's affects Debbie's sight and hearing making it very difficult for Debbie to get out and about independently. Debbie receives support from us in the form of equipment including flashing and vibrating doorbells and fire alarms.

Debbie also uses our Communicator Guide Service regularly to get her out and about as well as attend events like the Deaf Café in Redhill.

Debbie said, **"Without the support of Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey I would be lost and completely isolated."**

**We have:**



**supported 248 Deaf people during the last year**



**provided BSL translation support on 876 occasions**



**run 24 Deaf Cafés across Surrey**

# INTERPRETING AND ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES

Our Interpreting Team and One-to-One Service had a busy year! They delivered:



**742** interpreting bookings



**6,888** hours of one-to-one communicator guides



**5,244** vision impairment one-to-one support worker hours



Our Vision Impairment Support Workers and Communicator Guides provide one-to-one assistance to help meet social care needs.

Communicator Guide, Suzy said, **"I love the relationships I build with my clients and the things I learn from them: from helping achieve their personal goals, from fitness**

**to further education, to essential tasks like shopping and medical appointments. I always leave my visits with a sense of achievement knowing that I have assisted them to do something they would not have been able to do without my support."**

Lorraine, pictured above, has been supported by us for the last 16 years and said, **"I would be stuck indoors with no access to the community or opportunity to take part in all the activities I do without the support of Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey. I would be very isolated and depressed."**



# HARD OF HEARING SERVICES

Our team of Hearing Loss Advisors help and support people who are hard of hearing, or deafened, to feel connected and to live alongside friends and neighbours and not become isolated, which can happen so easily.

Our Hearing Loss Advisors have helped over 380 people during the year.



## CASE STUDY

Visitors to the home of Mr & Mrs S were exasperated as they were being left outside since the couple could not hear the doorbell. We gave them a doorbell alarm they could “see” with a light that indicated someone was at the door.

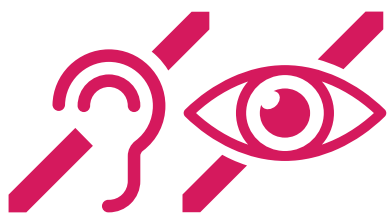
The couple also had problems with the TV volume, as one needed it at a higher volume than the other, which was causing arguments. As a result, we set up a TV two-in-one listener so now they can watch the TV at different levels in harmony. They were delighted with outcome and were reassured that independent living would be much easier!



# DEAFBLIND SERVICES

Having combined sight and hearing loss can be incredibly isolating and we do everything we can to ensure deafblind people are offered opportunities to get out and about and have the same experiences as everyone else.

During the year we:



performed  
**410** specialist  
deafblind  
assessments

had **128**  
deafblind  
people attend  
recreation  
activities

organised and  
ran **10** activity  
sessions



**Our Deafblind Friendship Group meets regularly for fun and accessible activities.**

One stand-out activity was when the group went to The Grange in Bookham for afternoon tea and scones. The group had a wonderful time! Each person in the group was assisted by a Communicator Guide to support them over the course of the afternoon. Much tea was drunk, and scones consumed!

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE (CYPS)

Our team of qualified Habilitation Specialists support children and young people from early childhood through to 18 years of age. The support they provide includes guiding children through the process of organising themselves at home, and school, so they can start and continue to look after themselves independently.

Skills gained include: mobility training and using a cane, learning how to organise their room, dress themselves, and get familiar with routes to and from school and other places of interest.

Alongside specialist habilitation, our Children and Young People's Team also offers recreation activities, family support, and specialist counselling. In the last year, we have:

- Supported **280** children
- Organised and attended **28** different events for the children and families we support
- Hosted **356** children at various events



"Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey was the first, and indeed continues to be the only, organisation that offered young Christian and my family the opportunity to relate and feel part of the community through the events we attended, and friendships we made. The mobility training has enhanced Christian's confidence towards independent living and the provision of the Braille machine has improved his reading and writing skills tremendously.

Long live Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey."

Chris, Christian's Dad.

# ADVICE, INFORMATION AND BENEFITS

Our small, but highly knowledgeable, and dedicated team provide support and expert advice to people who are blind, vision impaired, Deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind to apply for welfare benefits. We assess everyone's individual situation to help maximise their financial security and freedom.



## CASE STUDY

**The Benefits Team supported a vision impaired person who had a learning disability and a neurological disorder. The individual was experiencing coordination, balance and speech difficulties, which left them unable to interact with people.**

Their Personal Independence Plan (PIP) assessment had broken down as they were unable to complete the application process. They were also at high risk of having their other benefits stopped as they were unable to attend Universal Credit (UC) interviews due to access barriers, which the individual

We help with applications for Personal Independence Payments, Universal Credit, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit, Carers Allowance, Blue Badge applications, Housing Benefit, Access to Work and Council Tax Reduction.



We have helped **427** people in Surrey to successfully apply for benefits equating to **£241,926**.

was unable to explain to the teams at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

After another failed attempt at the PIP application we stepped in. The team spent time explaining how the process works to the person they were supporting, and how important it was that they remained calm and trusted us to help them complete the application process.

With our support and encouragement, the person has been awarded a maximum payment for PIP, full Universal Credit for the group Limited Capability of Work Related Activity and Housing Benefit. They are now able to engage with the DWP in a positive way.

# VOLUNTEERING

We have volunteers in a range of different roles including drivers, home visitors, befrienders, tech support, fundraisers, and even a photographer!

They are an essential part of our team and we try to ensure they get as much out of their volunteering as the people they support.

## BIRTE AND HELEN

Birte has Glaucoma and Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) and has been supported by the charity with rehabilitation, equipment from our resource centre and our volunteers.

Helen visits Birte in her home once a week for a cuppa and catch-up. Birte said, "My visits from Helen give me the will to live; I so look forward to them, as otherwise I don't see anyone." Helen said, "It is immensely satisfying to help Birte, we have such a laugh."

We have helped over **100** people in Surrey to stay connected with our home visitor and befriending services.



# FUNDRAISING

Our small fundraising team, work tirelessly to raise awareness of our services and raise money to enable us to do more. This is achieved through increasing the number of people who make regular donations to us, holding community fundraising events, working with businesses, applying for trusts and grants, and encouraging people to leave a gift to us in their will.



# OUR FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

A look at the funds we raise in a year and how we spend it to continue being here for every person in Surrey who is blind, vision impaired, Deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind.

## INCOME



Charitable activities	£2,392,053
Donations and legacies	£413,929
Other income	£51,389
Investments	£23,839
Trading activities	£15,400

**In 2022/2023 we received a total of £2,896,610** from all activities thanks to the funding we received and our generous supporters and their fundraising efforts.

## EXPENDITURE

Every penny we spend goes towards supporting people in Surrey who are blind, vision impaired, Deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind and making life easier for them.

**Our total expenditure for the year was £2,794,696, with £2,761,582 spent on charitable activities.**





**The following organisations and trusts have supported us with donations this year totalling £238,566.\***

# THANK YOU!

**We are so thankful to all our supporters, volunteers and staff for all they have done in the last year; we could not provide these essential services and support without you.**

- BBC Children in Need
- Bryan and June Amos Foundation
- Community Foundation for Surrey - NHS Charities Together & Carrington Family Trust Grants Fund
- London Borough of Hounslow Thriving Communities Fund
- Surrey County Council Members Allocation
- The Openwork Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund - RC London and South East Region
- Vision Foundation Resilience Fund
- Co-op Local Community Fund
- The Sterry Family Foundation
- East Surrey Place
- M&G
- Spelthorne Borough Council Annual Fund
- Tesco Community Grants
- UK Deaf Sport
- Walton Charity
- Guildford Lions
- Leatherhead Lions
- Gresham Artisans Golf Club
- Woking District Rotary Club



\* All donations over £2,500

# FUNDING CASE STUDY

**Roz Moseling is our Digital Storytelling Officer and her role is funded by the Surrey Heartlands Workforce Innovation Fund.**

The project was designed in response to the difficulties with recruiting staff and volunteers across the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector, and into Health and Social Care. Roz has been experimenting with lots of different approaches using social media, and short-form video content, to increase the number of people we attract to work for us by telling stories with the people we support, and the staff and volunteers in our team.

Roz said, "We were really lucky to get the funding approved for my role. One of the aims of my role is

to help recruit more people into the sector, and also to reach new and different audiences that we were not communicating with before.

We have been creating video content that features the roles of our staff, and the people we support, whilst showcasing our activities and events. We are experimenting with the type of content we post from photos to videos, and the content of the videos, from animation to staff stories, and the timings of the post. We have created a new TikTok channel for the charity and we are posting YouTube Shorts, plus there is so much more to come."



## Contact details

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