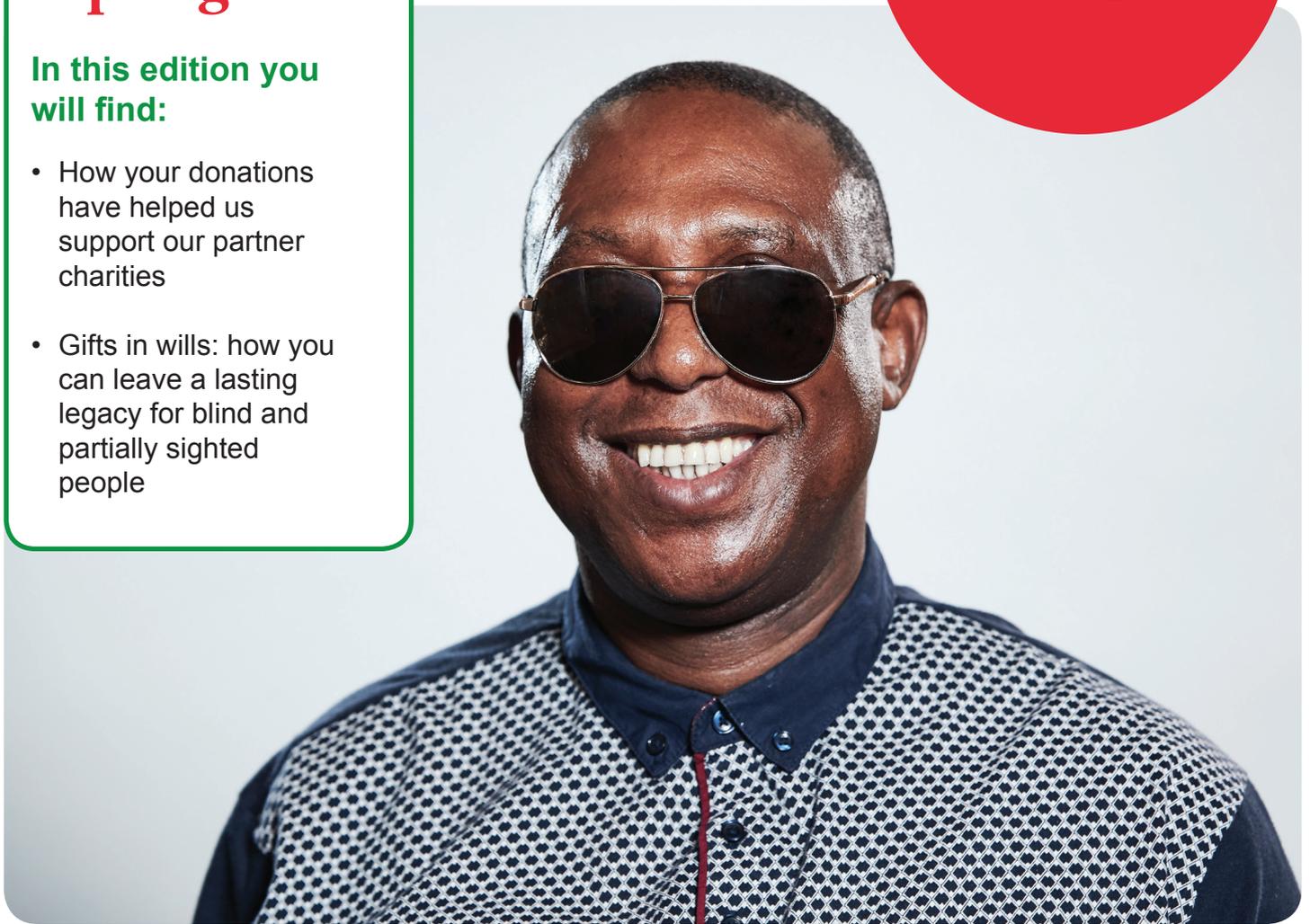


## Spring 2019

### In this edition you will find:

- How your donations have helped us support our partner charities
- Gifts in wills: how you can leave a lasting legacy for blind and partially sighted people



Welcome to your spring 2019 edition of *Insight*. I hope you find it inspiring to learn how your generosity towards the Greater London Fund for the Blind (GLFB) has helped blind and partially sighted people to live happier and more independent lives.

The following stories demonstrate how your gifts have helped the GLFB's partner charities expand their services and develop new innovations. Our support means that our partners can reduce the amount of time their staff and volunteers need to spend on fundraising, concentrating instead on what they do best: providing care and support to people affected by sight loss in the Greater London area.

In this edition we take a look at some of the success stories made possible by your continued support. Every one of our partner charities depend on funds from the GLFB to help make their work possible. Generous supporters like you enable us to provide this funding.

Thank you.



**Dr Olivia Curno**  
Chief Executive



## You have helped our partner charities to change lives

### Kingston upon Thames Association for the Blind (KAB)

#### You helped Ryley to fulfil his wish of riding a bike

Kingston upon Thames Association for the Blind (KAB) runs a variety of projects for blind and partially sighted people including: the Social Eyes Group which offers crafts, quizzes, gentle exercise and refreshments; a monthly Lunch Club providing food and company for more than 25 people, and a Talking Newspaper. The charity also provides grants to visually impaired people in need.

13-year-old Ryley has an eye condition called bilateral renal coloboma and is registered as severely visually impaired. Like most other boys of his age, Ryley has many sporty interests including cycling - something he had always wanted to do.

Since KAB paired Ryley with his Tandem Buddy, Jon, in February 2018 a whole new world has opened up. Ryley has spent hours at a time cycling with Jon on a tandem bike. In just a few weeks he was riding around Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common, Surbiton and beyond – each time enthusing about how much he enjoyed it. Ryley's mum shares that, whilst there may be several occasions where Ryley feels behind, flourishing in physical activities makes him feel able, not disabled:

*“Ryley returns from a ride really energised, upbeat and keen to share what he has learnt that day and is clearly developing a real passion for cycling. The whole experience is very positive, not just for Ryley but also his family.”*

Ryley's mum



### Sutton Vision

Sutton Vision services start from recognition of the psychological and practical impact of sight loss or visual impairment. They focus on six main activities: information and advice; advocacy provided by the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer; an activity programme promoting health and wellbeing; advice about low vision equipment and assistive technology and recreation and leisure group activities to prevent social isolation.

Sutton Vision's preventative services are delivered by staff based at the Sutton Vision resource centre, as well as a team of 30 volunteers engaged in a wide range of activities. They involve people who are blind or have a visual impairment, particularly offering community awareness training but also organising activities in the local community and offering support through their telephone contact network.



### Middlesex Association for the Blind (MAB)

#### You helped Dan access employment and dignity

Middlesex Association for the Blind (MAB) provides support for people with a visual impairment to help them to lead full, active and independent lives. Supporting people living in the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Enfield, Harrow, Haringey, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond, MAB's life-transforming services – including home visiting and a telephone helpline – are in high demand.



Dan lost his job at a London airport after his sight deteriorated and he was unable to perform his role adequately. Concerned with the impact sight loss might have on his employment and with no known avenues of support, Dan had tried to hide his visual impairment from his employer. By the time Dan was referred to the services of MAB he was suffering from depression and unsure where to go to for help.

Through the employment service and provision of emotional support from MAB's information and advice services, Dan built up his confidence and was able to speak openly to prospective employers about his sight condition. He is now employed within a similar role and his fellow colleagues are fully aware of his sight impairment and the support they can give him.

### MertonVision

#### You helped Peter be part of his community and regain his confidence

Since 1965, MertonVision has reached blind and partially sighted people of all ages through a range of projects.

Peter, a retired accountant, lost his sight over a decade ago and was left with no functional vision. As Peter's family were unable to visit him regularly he was isolated for most of the week. Unable to manage on his own, Peter had no mobility skills, including being able to walk without tripping or falling, cross streets or use public transport. He lost his confidence and became virtually housebound and depressed as a result.

MertonVision stepped in to arrange an outreach worker who first worked with Peter to register him as a visually impaired person in Merton. This enabled him to access alternative travel services and concessions. Peter was later introduced to the MertonVision Lunch Club where he soon made friends and began to regain some of his confidence.

Peter is now able to access various groups at MertonVision independently using the different forms of transport available to him. Through his continued involvement with the charity, Peter has been able to become an active member of his community.



*“I am very grateful for the services provided to me by MertonVision. It has given me confidence. I can now handle things on a daily basis. Many more people with a visual impairment could benefit by spending time with MertonVision”.*

Peter

## BlindAid

### You helped Shirley get back on her feet

BlindAid provides a variety of services to improve the lives of blind and partially sighted people across the 12 inner London boroughs and the City of London. Whilst their core service is Home Visiting, as well as awarding long term grants of equipment to support independent living, BlindAid run fortnightly Coffee Events and provide Community Projects where people can attend free classes such as cooking. Isolation affects many visually impaired people, especially older people with additional mobility issues, which is why BlindAid's home visiting service is such a lifeline.



When Shirley lost her sight two years ago, she didn't know how to cope and felt totally overwhelmed. She was referred to BlindAid and was highly emotional and upset when she first met with her Sight Support Worker, Leanne. Leanne helped Shirley to apply for the benefits she was entitled to and as Shirley found it too difficult to leave home initially, Shirley arranged additional home support with accessible technology which enabled Shirley to feel more independent in her home.

Gradually Leanne encouraged Shirley to venture out of her home for short trips; to go for a coffee or take a short walk in the park. Leanne listened to Shirley and continued to support her through even the most difficult times. Two years on, Shirley's confidence

has soared. She now volunteers at a coffee morning in Wandsworth for members of the local community and was successful in an application for a guide dog and is now training with her new companion. Shirley now feels excited for the future and what she can achieve.

## SeeAbility

### You helped Joyce enjoy the simple things in life – such as making herself a cup of tea

SeeAbility provides support and champions better eye care for people with learning disabilities and autism, many of whom have sight loss. Access to SeeAbility's specialist support and the right high and low tech equipment helps people overcome huge barriers and achieve things every day. Sometimes small adjustments can make a huge difference, opening up a whole range of new opportunities."

For Joyce, 79, being able to make her own cup of tea when she wants to, using assisted technology, makes her confidence soar. Thanks to support from SeeAbility's Vision Rehabilitation Team, Joyce has gained lots of skills that help her be more independent in the kitchen. She can now make a hot drink safely using a specialist One Cup kettle. This is a huge boost and will give her the confidence she needs to progress towards achieving even more in the years to come. Specialist rehabilitation support helps people like Joyce learn new skills. This opens up new opportunities for the people SeeAbility supports so that they can live life to the full.

*"There's nothing like a hot cuppa when it's cold outside and I'm really proud to be able to make tea safely on my own."*

Joyce



## Sight for Surrey



### You helped Rhoda maintain her independence through access to technology

Sight for Surrey provides a range of support to blind and partially sighted children and adults. This includes: rehabilitation programmes, training to help improve mobility and communication skills and information and guidance on employment and assistive technology.

Rhoda has macular degeneration and glaucoma which means she can see very little. Rhoda is determined to live an independent life. She still swims every morning and travels as far as Scotland to visit family. Sight for Surrey's Resource Centre provided Rhoda with a range of technological aids that have helped her remain in her home of more than 30 years. She uses a liquid level indicator to ensure hot liquids do not overflow; she has talking scales so she can still weigh things out correctly and she can find out what's in her larder by using her 'Pen Friend', which reads labels out to her.

*"Sight for Surrey's Resource Centre has been of great value to me. The different aids have enabled me to continue with everyday tasks that are second nature to a sighted person."*

Rhoda

## CLARITY - Employment for Blind People

### You helped Natasha grow her confidence and make friends for life

CLARITY is one of the UK's first social enterprises and has been training and supporting disabled people since 1854. Their belief is that all disabled people should have an opportunity for employment and the chance to do something great. Powered by a workforce that is predominantly blind or otherwise disabled, CLARITY manufacture luxury bath and beauty products, alongside everyday cleaning and toiletry products.

Natasha has been partially sighted since birth. Before joining CLARITY, she worked as a receptionist for a dentist's office for 12 years. However, she did not feel supported with her disability and decided to look for another employer. Her work adviser informed her about CLARITY, and she is now a member of the team working two days a week.

Initially Natasha was worried about working directly with blind people because her eyesight was deteriorating (with the possibility of it going completely) and she thought that might upset her. However, after meeting her visually impaired colleagues she now understands that life is not over if you lose your sight, you can still accomplish a lot and there is help available. Natasha enjoys working at CLARITY and feels at ease knowing that her productivity is no longer restricted by her disability. The organisation is fully equipped for visually impaired people and that has provided Natasha with a new found hope for the future and greater independence.

*"I am glad that there are organisations like CLARITY who help people like me not only to have meaningful employment but also to meet likeminded people who can help and who can become your friends for life."*

Natasha

## Croydon Vision

### You helped Mark to step outside - and beyond - for the first time in seven years

Croydon Vision supports individuals who have a visual impairment or who are blind, providing individuals with sight loss a safe space and community. Their services encompass all ages, ensuring the needs of members are met throughout all stages of their lives.

Mark initially called Croydon Vision to enquire about the services he could access which led to his first visit. He felt so supported by the organisation that he found the confidence to step outside for the first time in seven years and returned the next week. Mark was experiencing many difficulties

including: difficulty using his computer, struggling to identify the different sizes and textures of money when shopping alone, as well as not being able to enjoy a hot drink safely.

Since accessing support from Croydon Vision, Mark can now log into his computer and has mastered the art of touch-typing which is opening up new lines of communication that will enhance his social life. His next project will be learning how to use accessibility software which will support him to become even more independent and maintain his friendships using social media.



## The GLFB's Programme Fund

### The Amber Trust - You helped Ashleigh become an incredible musician

The Amber Trust was founded in 1995 to help blind and partially sighted children across the UK who have a talent or love for music. With the right encouragement, these children can develop their talents to break down barriers to social inclusion and fulfil their potential as individuals and musicians. Children like Ashleigh.

Ashleigh, aged 15, has been blind since birth, is on the autistic spectrum and has hearing difficulties. From a very young age, she developed a love of music and plays the piano, drums, organ, guitar and saxophone all to a very high standard. Looking for opportunities for Ashleigh to develop her musical talent, her parents, Christine and Steve, struggled to find a music teacher for Ashleigh, with many unable to accommodate her additional needs. An introduction to The Amber Trust changed that.

For the past year, Ashleigh has had piano tuition with Amber Trustee, Adam Ockelford (Professor of Music at Roehampton University), and her natural musicality has taken off. She loves to tackle technically challenging pieces and is fascinated to find out how music is written down and how it works. Adam reported that "Ashleigh has really matured over the last year and has dramatically improved her musicianship skills".



Ashleigh has since performed at numerous locations including the House of Commons, the Bank of England and Cadogan Hall. She also recently joined the National Open Youth Orchestra - the UK's first disabled-led orchestra.

*"When we eventually came across the Amber Trust, it was a godsend... It helped Ashleigh come on leaps and bounds musically and socially thanks to the interaction with her tutors"*

Christine and Steve - Ashleigh's parents



## Help us to build a brighter future for blind and partially sighted people

The Greater London Fund for the Blind (GLFB) has a strong history of supporting thousands of blind and partially sighted people across Greater London. This has been made possible thanks to a special group of people who remembered the GLFB in their will, as well as those who give donations to support our work.

The need for the GLFB to continue supporting our partner charities through raising vital funds is set to rise. It is estimated that 258,000 people will be living with sight loss in London by 2030 and one in five people will live with sight loss during their lifetime.

A gift in your will - whatever size - will stand the GLFB in a strong position to support our partner charities in providing vital services that reduce social isolation and enable blind and partially sighted people to access their communities, maintain their independence and live their lives to the full.

## The legacy of Sir Arthur Pearson

It was a gift from our founder, Sir Arthur Pearson, that made the establishment of the GLFB possible in the first place. His legacy is one of a long history of helping to support blind and partially sighted people to achieve their potential.

Making your will and keeping it up to date ensures that your family, friends and causes that you care about are taken care of. We realise that your loved ones come first, but a gift in your will to the GLFB could mean you leave a lasting legacy of support, empowerment and opportunity for blind and partially sighted people.

If you would like more information about gifts in wills, or to speak with a member of our team, please get in touch with us. We would be delighted to send you a personal copy of our gifts in wills guide.



**CALL US:** 020 7620 2066 **Email us:** [fundraising@glfb.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@glfb.org.uk)

**VISIT US ONLINE:** [www.glfb.org.uk](http://www.glfb.org.uk)

**WRITE TO US:** Greater London Fund for the Blind  
Sir John Mills House, 12 Whitehorse Mews,  
37 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7QD

## For more information about our work or the work of our partner charities please visit the websites below:

### Greater London Fund for the Blind

www.glfb.org.uk  
Tel: 0207 620 2066

### BlindAid

www.blindaid.org.uk  
Tel: 020 7403 6184

### Croydon Vision

www.croydonvision.org.uk  
Twitter: @CroydonVision  
Tel: 020 8688 2486

### CLARITY

www.clarityefbp.org  
Tel: 020 7619 1650

### Kingston Association for the Blind

www.kingstonassociationforblind.org  
Tel: 020 8605 0060

### MertonVision

www.mertonvision.org.uk  
Tel: 020 8540 5446

### Middlesex Association for the Blind

www.aftb.org.uk  
Tel: 020 8423 5141

### SeeAbility

www.seeability.org  
Tel: 01372 755 000

### Sight for Surrey

www.sightforsurrey.org.uk  
Tel: 01372 377 701

### Sutton Vision

www.suttonvision.org.uk  
Tel: 020 8409 7166  
Twitter: @sutton\_vision

Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals who work with our partner charities. With thanks to BlindAid, Kingston upon Thames Association for the Blind, MertonVision and Sight for Surrey for providing images.

## Want to find out more about our work or the impact of your gifts?

We would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with our Fundraising team:

### Contact us



Call us 020 7620 2066

Email us [fundraising@glfb.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@glfb.org.uk)

Visit us online [www.glfb.org.uk](http://www.glfb.org.uk)



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