

GUIDE  
DOGS



# The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

## Report and Financial Statements 2014



Company limited by guarantee  
Registered in England and Wales number 291646  
Registered charity in England and Wales number 209617  
Registered charity in Scotland number SC038979

Almost two million people in the UK  
are living with sight loss.

By 2050, there could be nearly four million.



# Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

## Contents

	<b>Pages</b>
Strategic report	1 - 22
Report of the Board of Trustees (incorporating Directors' Report)	23 - 28
Principal Advisors	29
Independent Auditor's report	30 – 31
Consolidated statement of financial activities incorporating an income and expenditure account	32
Consolidated and charity balance Sheets	33
Consolidated cash flow statement	34
Accounting policies	35 – 37
Notes to the financial statements	38 – 50
Major gifts and donations	51

# Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

## Objects and activities

The objects for which Guide Dogs group and its subsidiaries were established are to promote the health, equality and independence of people who are blind or partially sighted:

- Providing guide dogs for people who are blind or partially sighted.
- Training and education for people who are blind or partially sighted in the use of such guide dogs.
- The relief, prevention and cure of vision impairment.
- Providing such services, facilities and activities for the benefit of people who are blind or partially sighted as the Association shall from time to time deem fit.
- The relief of children and young people who are registered blind, registered partially sighted or classified, or should be classified, by a local education authority as visually impaired.

Our vision is for a society in which people who are blind or partially sighted enjoy the same freedom of movement as everyone else.

Our purpose is to:

- Deliver the guide dog service and other mobility services.
- Break down legal and physical barriers.
- Enable people who are blind or partially sighted to get around on their own terms.
- Use our expertise and skills to deliver a range of services to meet the needs of children and young people with vision impairment.

## Strategic aims

We are now five years into our Building Extraordinary Partnerships strategy enabling more people who are blind or partially sighted to get out and about on their own terms, and offering them a broader range of services.

We listen carefully to our customers to ensure we offer the most appropriate service to their need, ultimately providing them with the skills and the tools that enable them to live their lives the way they choose.

## 2014 Highlights

2014 was another successful year for Guide Dogs.

We used our expertise and experience to enable more people with sight loss to get out and about on their own terms and to take control of their own lives, enjoying independence and getting around with confidence.

We continued to invest in the long-term sustainable growth of our guide dog service:

- We increased the number of puppies bred under our well-established breeding programme at the National Breeding Centre.
- The number of newly qualified partnerships and the number of active partnerships both increased over 2013, figures and the level of satisfaction with the quality of our training remained consistently high.
- Age is not a barrier to benefit from owning a guide dog: in 2014, our youngest guide dog owner was 11 years old and our oldest was 91.
- As part of our Service Improvement

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Programme, we scoped our future approach to breeding and training our dogs. Tailoring each dog's training from an earlier stage in their development will result in a higher number of dogs qualifying as guide dogs.

Guide dogs give freedom and independence to many people with sight loss but others require different support and help; we therefore continued to develop and invest in other services to meet the differing needs of our customers.

We continued to expand My Guide, our sighted guiding service, where trained volunteers assist people with sight loss by guiding them to shops, community events or other activities. The number of My Guide partnerships, and the number of people who completed My Guide Level 1 training – who went on to use their skills to guide people with sight loss – increased significantly over 2013 figures.

We continued our investment in children's services and in 2014 we re-launched National Blind Children's Society under its new brand, Blind Children UK, supporting 1,300 children and young people and their families.

Our buddy dog service also grew; we placed more buddy dogs with young people in 2014, to help them overcome the isolation and depression that often come with sight loss as well as enhancing their sensory and physical development.

Our partnership with Blue Peter was rekindled, to mark 50 years since we first worked together and in doing so, we reached out to a whole new audience of potential supporters.

Our collaborative work with Microsoft saw the ground-breaking Cities Unlocked technology which is set to transform the landscape for people with sight loss in years to come.

We maintained a focus on other areas of our work, enabling us to fulfil our Building Extraordinary Partnerships strategy and use our voice to influence the way that people in the UK think about sight loss.

High profile campaigning enabled us to engage successfully with politicians and the media on a number of important issues. As a result of our actions:

- Habilitation is now included in the code of practice of the Children's and Family Act 2014, which offers guidance on how children and young people with disabilities in England access support.
- An attack on an assistance dog became an offence in England, Wales and Scotland in March 2014 and carries a maximum three-year prison sentence.
- Microchipping of all dogs will now be required in England and Wales by 2016.
- Installation of an artificial sound generator will become mandatory in new quiet vehicles from 2019.

We increased our profile in the media as a result of our communications work:

- We featured in more than 10,500 pieces of media coverage.
- Guide Dogs Week in October raised £0.7 million.
- Our high profile gala evening in December attracted a number of notable celebrities and raised more than £0.2 million.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

In a competitive environment our income from fundraising grew by more than £8 million. Individual Giving recruited more than 200,000 supporters and we had conversations with 20,000 people interested in leaving us a gift in their will.

We celebrated the extraordinary people who benefit from our services at our Guide Dogs Annual Awards gala evening in December. We celebrated the achievements of our guide dog owners and others who make our life-changing work possible and heard the inspirational and moving stories of many of the winners.

Our volunteers worked tirelessly to help bring our services closer to our customers and to help raise awareness of our work amongst the public. Volunteers carry out a variety of roles from providing sighted guiding and driving our customers and equipment, to raising funds and raising puppies, and we are indebted to all of them for giving their time, skills and energy so generously. At the end of 2014, there were 14,660 volunteers carrying out more than 25,000 roles.

The following sections provide more details of our wide-ranging work and our ambitions for the future.

### Guide dogs

A partnership with a guide dog offers a unique way for people with sight loss to enjoy the same freedom as everyone else. Our guide dog partnerships have been transforming lives for over 80 years. We remain the largest breeder and trainer of working dogs in the world. We make a lifetime promise to provide our guide dog owners with a guide dog for as long as they need one. This could be as many as eight dogs over the course of

a lifetime. Anyone of any age can apply for a guide dog and no one is denied a dog on the grounds of cost.

When a person contacts us to apply for a guide dog, we first assess their needs and talk to them about what owning a guide dog entails – the commitment as well as the benefits. A guide dog does not suit everyone's needs, but if a guide dog is the right option, we begin the process of carefully matching a dog with the prospective owner. Together, they complete three to five weeks of intensive training before qualifying as an active guide dog partnership. We continue to support the partnership at home to ensure that all is well.

When a dog approaches retirement age, we begin the process of identifying a successor dog if that is what the owner needs. In some cases another guide dog may no longer be the support that is required, in which case we work closely with our customers to identify alternative services that will help them move around freely and safely.

### Achievements and performance:

- Our world class breeding programme delivered excellent results during 2014 with our 284 brood bitches and 90 stud dogs delivering 1,490 puppies.
- Puppy profiling assessments are now a standard process and help us identify the pups most likely to go on to become successful guide dogs. 1,421 pups were placed with volunteer puppy walkers.
- Together with our guide dog training schools and mobility teams, we created 847 guide dog partnerships during 2014, only marginally fewer than our target.
- 360 (of the 847) were first-time partnerships and 487 people were matched with successor dogs.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

- By the end of the year there were 4,948 active partnerships (compared with 4,798 at the end of 2013).

We have more than 80 years' experience in training guide dogs, but we continue to pilot new ways of working in our mobility teams by joining up the early stages of training with the more advanced training and partnership activities. Staff members, who are accredited assessors for the International Guide Dog Federation, have shared their experience with colleagues both here in the UK and internationally. Insights learned from our colleagues in America resulted in us trialling some innovative methods for training our dogs to ensure we remain a forward-thinking and acting organisation, one that delivers the best training techniques while offering the best care and welfare for our dogs. Happy, contented and well trained dogs will learn quickly and become the most effective guide dogs.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of service to our customers and we work closely with them to ensure we continue to do so. Our most recent customer survey reported satisfaction levels of 97% against a target of 90 %.

**Plans for the future:** We will continue to seek ways to enable more people with sight loss to experience the benefits of a partnership with a guide dog.

During 2015 our goal is to create between 840 and 850 partnerships – a similar number as 2014. This will allow us the time to implement changes to the way our mobility teams work so that we are well-positioned to see growth in the number of guide dog partnerships in the years to come.

By 2020 we aim to increase the number of guide dog partnerships we train to 1,000 a year.

### Buddy dogs

Buddy dogs are dogs that have not qualified to work as guide dogs but who can nevertheless play a vital role in improving the quality of life for young people who are blind or partially sighted. Buddy dogs contribute to their sensory and physical development, enhance their confidence and self-esteem, and improve their communication skills. They can also help children overcome the isolation and depression that often comes with sight loss.

Buddy dogs are placed with young people and their families, or in schools and organisations. They provide the opportunity for young people to experience the responsibility of caring for a dog, and can help us assess if a guide dog could help them in the future.

#### **Achievements and performance:**

- We placed 37 new buddy dogs in 2014 (32 in 2013).
- By the end of 2014 there were 95 active partnerships (64 in 2013).

**Plans for the future:** We will offer the buddy dog service, if appropriate, to children and young people and their families when they first contact us for support.

### My Guide

2014 was another successful year for My Guide, our sighted guiding service. All 20 mobility teams, in partnership with a wide range of My Guide Associate Organisations across the country, now offer this service.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Trained volunteers are partnered with people with sight loss to help them get out of their homes and back into the community. Being able to get out and about helps reduce the feeling of isolation that many people with sight loss face every day. The My Guide partnership meets on a regular basis, agreeing the scope and timing of activities. A key part of the volunteer's role is to identify other people in the community who can offer support and help in providing a long-term solution.

My Guide Friends and Family partnerships provide sighted guiding training to the close support networks of people with sight loss, giving them the skills and confidence to support their loved ones.

My Guide Assist is the ecosystem improvement element of the My Guide service where we aim to make a positive impact on our local environment. We provide basic sighted guiding training and information about how sight loss affects people's lives to members of the public, enabling them to use their skills in everyday life to support members of their community with sight loss.

My Guide Open for Business trains staff in hospitals, large national retailers, transport companies and other customer-facing organisations to use sighted guiding techniques to make their organisations more accessible to people with sight loss.

### **Achievements and performance:**

- By the end of 2014, every mobility team had a My Guide Ambassador whose role is to promote and develop the service in their local area.
- 863 new My Guide partnerships started in 2014 (compared with 816 in 2013).

- 6,474 people completed My Guide Level 1 training (compared with 4,137 in 2013). We estimate that these people, and those we have trained in previous years, used their skills more than 33,000 times to help people with sight loss. Of those, more than 5,000 were trained as part of our Open for Business initiative.
- 855 people completed Level 2 training, qualifying them to support someone as part of a My Guide partnership.
- We trained 164 people as My Guide practitioners, enabling them to provide My Guide training for other volunteers.

**Plans for the future:** During 2015, we will support 310 continuing My Guide partnerships and will extend this service to support 720 new partnerships. We will continue to train more volunteers to all levels of My Guide, and as a result aim to help people with sight loss on more than 40,000 occasions.

## **Children and young people**

Guide Dogs and Blind Children UK provide a range of services to meet the needs of children and young people with sight loss.

Guide Dogs provides:

- The young guide dog service.
- Buddy dogs.

Blind Children UK provides:

- Movement Matters (our habilitation service which offers support and advice about mobility, orientation and independence).
- CustomEyes large print books.
- Family support.
- Education support.
- Access technology.
- Recreational activities.

# Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Information about these services are detailed in the Blind Children UK Report and Financial Statements.

Blind Children UK, formerly National Blind Children's Society, was re-launched on 27 May 2014.

The launch campaign, themed Opening up the World, helped raise awareness of Blind Children UK and our work, as well as the challenges faced by children and young people with sight loss, and their families.

The campaign generated more than 400 pieces of media coverage, a significant increase in visits to our website, an increase in the number of people liking our Facebook page, and an increase in Twitter followers. There was also an increase in enquiries to our mobility teams.

The launch campaign was shortlisted for a Social Buzz Award in the Best Charity/Not for Profit Social Media Strategy/Campaign category.

Our Opening up the World film was subsequently broadcast for free in all Vue cinemas for one month and was seen by 800,000 cinema goers.

A number of celebrity ambassadors supported us including the actress Joanna Page, and Paralympians Millie Knight and Chris Holmes.

## **Achievements and performance:**

- We worked with 864 families and 1,300 individuals by providing support on more than 2,500 occasions from our range of services including: habilitation; educational support; family support; access technology and recreational activities.

- We continued to invest in recruiting and training staff. We recruited 30 new members of front line staff including Family Support Officers, Education Support Officers, Recreational Activity Officers and Habilitation Specialists.
- More than 20 trainees continued their studies in the two-year habilitation course at the Institute of Education, University of London.
- We co-sponsored the Vision 2020 UK conference in June. Our joint exhibition stand with Guide Dogs received many visitors and compliments about Blind Children UK's new visual identity. We focused on gathering professional contacts and building ongoing relationships.

We began the initial phase of developing our volunteering strategy. We will continue to shape this further by piloting potential volunteer roles in 2015.

**Plans for the future:** We will work hard to raise awareness of Blind Children UK amongst the public to ensure we are at the forefront of their minds. Subject to raising the necessary funds, we will strive to continue to grow and develop our services so that we can reach many more children and young people with sight loss.

## **Research**

We undertake research so we can better understand the needs and experiences of people with sight loss and to be able to provide world class mobility services that meet their needs. We have two research programmes, Scientific research and Market research:

### **Scientific research**

Our canine research helps to inform,

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

preserve and enhance the performance of our dogs to maintain their quality of life as well as to ensure their suitability to the mobility needs of their owner.

Our psycho-social research is designed to maintain and enhance mobility by identifying social and psychological factors that affect the mobility of people with sight loss.

Our ophthalmic research seeks to gain insight into how residual vision may be harnessed and used to maintain the mobility of people with a visual impairment.

### Market research

Our market research ensures that Guide Dogs listens to the opinions of our existing and potential customers and supporters, as well as helping us to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing economic and policy environment in the UK.

**Achievements and performance:** Our canine research team managed a number of projects on topics such as puppy character profiling, breeding efficiencies, neutering practices, disease management and behavioural development.

We continued our long-standing collaboration with Nottingham University's School of Veterinary Medicine and Science which is part-way through a Guide Dogs-funded project to investigate the epidemiology of behaviour in guide dogs. The study progressed well in 2014 and will conclude in 2015. The Veterinary school started other projects including a part-funded study looking into the issues related to the early retirement of working guide dogs and how this could impact our customers.

We completed the first two stages of a project to investigate the effect of early nest experiences on the development of adult dog temperament to determine whether certain early socialisation techniques could prevent future adult behavioural problems. Results were used to inform the business on best practice and to formulate strategies to be tested in the final phase of the study which is expected to be completed at the end of 2015.

Our psycho-social researchers investigated habilitation services for children and young people to identify the nature and quality of services and training provided across the country to inform our children and young people's mobility service.

In conjunction with Cardiff University and Royal Holloway College, we continued our research to further our understanding of the depression that some people encounter on being diagnosed with sight loss and the interventions available to help them. We will continue to examine whether these interventions have a positive impact on mobility, psychological well-being and quality of life.

We carried out a large number of in-depth interviews amongst a broad range of people with vision impairment, and as a result we enhanced our understanding in a number of areas including: emotional response to sight loss; how sight loss affects people's outlook on life and people's use and preferences around road crossings.

We took the decision to suspend the funding of any new, speculative ophthalmic research projects for commercial reasons. Any future research

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

requirements will focus on ways of using residual vision to enhance mobility and will be tendered for. We remain committed to the funding of ongoing ophthalmic projects and the following research continued in 2014:

- An investigation of a potential new therapy for an inherited blindness that affects young children - Leber's Congenital Amaurosis (LCA).
- A study to investigate ways of improving the accuracy and effectiveness of assessing visual fields in children in order to better diagnose and monitor eye conditions.
- A study to investigate how different genes can alter an individual's risk of developing Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) in later life.

**Plans for the future:** We will continue to investigate appropriate emotional support mechanisms for people recently diagnosed with sight loss. We will focus on topics related to understanding and improving customer wellbeing and the customer experience. We will investigate the effect of early nest experiences on the development of adult dog temperament to determine whether certain early socialisation techniques can prevent future adult behavioural problems.

Our market research focus in 2015 is to continue our mission of listening to people with sight loss and to support the development of services that meet their needs.

### Technology

We believe that technology has significant potential to transform the ways in which people with sight loss can get out and about on their own terms. We

are lobbying for greater collaborative working between technology companies, transport providers, retailers, entertainment venues and policy makers, so that together we can deliver a technology-enabled solution to address mobility and independence for all.

We have a vision where one day people with sight loss will live as full, independent and enriched lives as sighted people. No longer will they have to depend on others to perform everyday tasks such as shopping, travelling and navigating public spaces.

**Achievements and performance:** On 6 November 2014 our collaborative partnership with Microsoft and Future Cities Catapult officially launched Cities Unlocked. The aim of the partnership is to develop and install technology to make our towns and cities more accessible. Phase one of the project was completed in 2014. An inclusive technology proof-of-concept that would significantly improve the mobility of people in the built environment was developed and tested and identified opportunities to make cities work better for everyone.

We continue to seek funding opportunities to enable us to deliver our Kinect mobility technology game for children and young people.

### Plans for the future:

- In the delivery of phase two of the Cities Unlocked programme, we will apply smart technologies to adapt the built environment to empower people with sight loss to engage with their communities on their own terms, providing a real and lasting ecosystem in Reading that is accessible and benefits everyone by enhancing freedom of movement, enjoyment and access to information on the move.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

- To develop a comprehensive mobility game using gesture-based gaming technology to deliver mobility training to children who are blind or partially sighted, and to gain external funding to make this a reality.
- To continue to gain insights from people with sight loss to understand their opinions and experiences which will inform our thinking about future technology-related services.
- To start to scope the development of a technology-based mobility service using mobile devices that aid navigation, empowerment and inclusion when out and about.
- As part of the RNIB, Action for Blind People, Action on Hearing Loss, SENSE and Guide Dogs online today lottery grant, to train those with sight loss to access travel and transport information and book tickets online.

### Advocacy and awareness

Expenditure within this section of the statement of financial activities includes the following activities on brand building, raising awareness, engagement and campaigning.

### Brand building and raising awareness

Guide Dogs carries out marketing communications activities to build its reputation and increase brand awareness. This activity is designed to break down the current barriers that prevent:

- People with sight loss from contacting Guide Dogs for help.
- Potential supporters from donating, volunteering or campaigning for the charity.

In 2014 we continued to develop and invest in our brand building activities, including:

- Ongoing filming for a two-part Me and My Guide Dog documentary.
- Testing quarterly awareness campaigns, including brand advertising.
- Continuing to develop Guide Dogs Week 2014.
- Significant public relations activity for our partnership with ITV Text Santa fundraising telethon in December.

### Achievements and performance:

- The filming of Me and My Guide Dog documentary was completed in 2014 and will be broadcast in 2015.
- Our advertising campaigns were designed to change perceptions of Guide Dogs. They promoted Dogs Unite, Guide Dogs Week and Christmas fundraising and achieved a growth in semi-prompted awareness from 15% to 18% and in unprompted awareness from 4% to 5%.
- Guide Dogs Week 2014 continued to use the call to action Stand Out for Guide Dogs. Nearly 300 items of media coverage were generated with a total reach of 218 million audience members. More than 2,000 fundraising events took place raising £750,000 in income, an all-time high. 10,000 signatures were added to the Talking Buses petition.
- ITV Text Santa generated high profile national TV coverage for Guide Dogs as well as introducing the charity to some potentially high profile supporters and ambassadors.

**Plans for the future:** We have ambitious plans to increase our relevance to people with sight loss and to the general public by making Guide Dogs a more significant part of their daily lives. This will

# Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

require further investment in our brand building activities to broaden perceptions of Guide Dogs and develop a deeper understanding of our work, focusing on people and partnerships, rather than just dogs.

In 2015 we will continue to develop and test brand advertising and its impact on both fundraising and service marketing campaigns.

We will integrate our updated key messages throughout all communications across the organisation.

The new two-part Me and My Guide Dog documentary will be broadcast on ITV.

## Engagement

Our engagement staff work in our mobility teams around the UK and work tirelessly to address the challenges faced by people with sight loss. They connect with local and regional communities and seek opportunities to promote our work and provide services to a wider audience. They aim to break down barriers which prevent people with sight loss from actively participating in society. They collaborate with other organisations who, like us, want to make a difference to the lives of people with sight loss.

### Achievements and performance:

- Our teams dealt with more than 520 access issues on behalf of people with sight loss.
- Through our volunteer network, we attended more than 4,300 public-facing events, speaking to many thousands of people about our life-changing services.
- We successfully influenced working practices in the police force by working in collaboration with

Northamptonshire Police and the Association of Chief Police Officers. We developed a service level agreement on dog attacks, which many police forces have now signed. The agreement lays out guidelines for how police will handle attacks on assistance dogs. As a result, guide dog owners in the UK can expect clear and direct support from the police if there is an attack on a guide dog.

- As part of the Northern Ireland Mobility Team 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations we staged a photographic exhibition in Parliament Buildings, attracting more than 25 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) to its launch. The exhibition was on display for 10 days, allowing a wide range of MLAs and other organisations to view the exhibition when hosting their own events.

Our engagement teams campaigned to break down barriers to help people with sight loss get out and about:

- Our Nottingham Team arranged for Labour MP Lilian Greenwood to take part in a blindfold bus challenge on board two Nottingham City Transport buses. Nottingham City Transport won an award for breaking down barriers for their work with Guide Dogs as part of our Talking Buses campaign.
- Following many years of campaigning the Northern Ireland Minister for Regional Development, Danny Kennedy, Member of the Legislative Assembly, announced the provision of audio visual announcements on Translink Metro services. The Northern Ireland engagement team also met with Transport Northern Ireland to discuss shared surface streets and kerb heights. As a result, Transport NI agreed to bring forward guidance in relation to kerb heights.
- The team also met with the Northern

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Ireland Local Government Association to discuss accessible public realm and planning powers for the 11 new councils.

We continued to build local collaborative networks:

- Working with other organisations we continued to promote and develop My Guide across the UK.
- We continued our collaboration with Ageing Better and sat on their steering committees across England.
- We worked with Victim Support Cambridgeshire to develop a 'best practice' awareness and training solution. This will be used nationally as a best practice solution with other Victim Support providers.
- We worked with local planning departments to influence street design to incorporate needs of people with sight loss and other disabilities.
- We worked in conjunction with Network Rail and First Great Western to improve the accessibility of Reading Station.
- We collaborated with East London Mosque resulting in an Islamic Awareness Training Workshop for Guide Dogs staff in the London team.
- We were represented on the UK Vision Strategy Working Group for Joint Strategic Needs Assessment guidance which aims to achieve a more effective and responsive local health and care system.
- We became members of Stockton, and Redcar and Cleveland Healthwatch Boards to represent the views of people with sight loss. Healthwatch is an independent charity that represents the views of the public about health and social care services in England.
- We supported the development of the Social Prescribing Service across

many areas of England. This is a pilot scheme run by the NHS which signposts patients to voluntary organisations which could provide support to patients living with long-term conditions.

- Together with Transport for London (TfL) we invited organisations working in the visual impairment sector to a presentation on TfL's plans to make transport in London more accessible. The London team chaired a Q&A session between delegates and heads of all modes of transport which resulted in a new bus driver training module being agreed.
- We provided an educational workshop to 250 managers, engineers and designers as part of the Eight2O Health and Safety project. Eight2O is a consortium, including IBM, Skanska and Atkins, that aims to invest in Thames Water's infrastructure over the next five years. The course enhanced their understanding of the needs of people with sight loss.
- Our actions led to the first English prosecution in December 2014 following the introduction of the dog attack legislation.

### Plans for the future:

- We will work on educating more police forces and other stakeholders about the service level agreement on dog attacks as well as the related recent changes in legislation.
- We will continue to build on the relationships made within our local communities, focusing on extending our services.
- We will further support and grow My Guide through collaboration with local and national organisations.
- We will continue to grow our public-facing events to engage with more of the public about our life-changing work.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

- Through effective collaboration we will continue to break down barriers which prevent people with sight loss having the independence to live life the way they choose.

### Campaigning

We campaign to break down barriers that prevent people with sight loss from getting out and about on their own terms. Our evidence-based public affairs campaigns reflect the issues that are important to people with sight loss. Our on-going campaigns in 2014 were: Dog Attacks - to ensure guide dogs and their owners are kept safe from attack by other dogs. Talking Buses - to make audio-visual announcements on all new buses compulsory. Streets Ahead - to ensure our streets are accessible to people who are blind or partially sighted, including prohibiting pavement parking across the UK, unless specifically permitted. Safe and Sound - to ensure quiet electric and hybrid vehicles are audibly detectable.

#### Achievements and performance:

- Dog Attacks: The Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime and Policing Act became law in March 2014, making an attack on an assistance dog an offence in England, Wales and Scotland, carrying a maximum three-year prison sentence. Microchipping of dogs has been compulsory in Northern Ireland since 2011, and will now be required for all dogs in England and Wales by April 2016. Responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on similar proposals showed widespread support for compulsory microchipping and the Government has indicated it will announce proposed next steps in early 2016.

- Talking Buses: 2014 was a busy year in which we met Baroness Kramer, Bus Minister six times, and held a parliamentary reception - attended by 160 MPs - to raise awareness of the campaign. In September we published Destination Unknown, a report highlighting the need for audio visual bus announcements, based on the results of a survey which received more than 2,000 responses, 800 of which were from people with sight loss. During Guide Dogs Week, the Stand Out for Guide Dogs bus tour saw nearly 10,000 people sign a petition for Talking Buses. Our award-winning stand at the autumn party conferences was visited by 25% of all MPs over a three-week period. 2014 also saw new Talking Buses announced in many places across the UK.
- Streets Ahead: Our lobbying garnered two Private Members Bills in Westminster on Pavement Parking, one for Scotland and one for England and Wales, as well as a separate Private Members Bill in the Scottish Parliament. This resulted in significant media coverage for the campaign. Thousands of people showed their support for the Bills through signing petitions and writing to their MPs. 5,287 people joined us in challenging the Prime Minister to 'Walk the Walk' and undertake a blindfolded walk through Downing Street. We also attended the Local Government Associations' Conference with our street clutter mini golf stand to engage with councillors on the issue of street clutter.
- Safe and Sound: We worked closely with MEPs to ensure the passing of an amendment to a European regulation that will make the installation of an artificial sound generator mandatory

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

in new quiet vehicles from 2019.

- There was also a large increase in the number of people signed up to take action with us, from 12,000 campaigners to 25,000, who between them had taken more than 38,000 actions by the end of October 2014. This significant increase over 2013 figures reflects the ever-deepening engagement of our supporters in these campaigns.
- We launched the What's on Offer campaign which aims to ensure that all children and young people with sight loss have access to good quality habilitation training. By the end of 2014, we had more than 5,000 campaigners signed up to our campaign.
- We were successful in getting habilitation (the support which develops a young person's mobility and communication skills) included in the revised code of practice for local authorities published to accompany the new Children and Families Act. This document includes a reference to habilitation as an example of support for children with special education needs. It also refers to Quality Standards in Habilitation.
- We met with Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Health, and Edward Timpson MP, Education Minister, in the first half of the year which resulted in a commitment from government to work with Blind Children UK as we seek to ensure habilitation standards are reviewed and met, and are provided by all local authorities. A second meeting was held with Jeremy Hunt MP in November where he was given a demonstration of habilitation training.
- Following the implementation of the new Children and Families Act in September, we wrote to all local authorities asking them to include habilitation in the services they offer. We are able to report that more than half now offer habilitation services.
- We developed our public affairs work in the House of Lords. We established several useful relationships, including with the Lords Spiritual, who spoke on our behalf, and the Shadow Leader of the Lords. We had more meetings with Peers and more mentions in our campaigns in the chamber than in any year previously. Several Peers who were unknown to us at the start of 2014 have become helpful advocates for issues that matter to people with sight loss. Pavement parking was debated in the Lords three times throughout the passage of the Deregulation Bill, providing opportunities to engage the support of new Peers from across the political spectrum and allowing us greater insight into the Government's position.

**Plans for the future:** We will continue to campaign to ensure governments at a national and local level take into account the needs of people with sight loss. In 2015, we will step up our Safe and Sound campaign, as well as launching a new campaign - Access All Areas - to stop access refusals. We will continue to develop our public affairs work in the House of Lords, so we can effectively influence both Houses for the benefit of people who are blind or partially sighted.

### Working with other organisations

Over the past few years we have made significant changes to our working practices to ensure we are in a position

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

to achieve the ambitious goals set out in our Building Extraordinary Partnerships strategy. We recognise that working in partnership is essential if we are to broaden services and support even more people with sight loss. Successful partnership working relies on there being a good 'fit' between organisations and we have strengthened our relationships with those organisations with whom we can deliver our strategy.

Our collaborations and partner relationships have contributed significantly to our ability to deliver mobility services to people with sight loss and represent them effectively.

**Achievements and performance:** We continued to play a major role in the definition and implementation of the UK Vision Strategy (UKVS). This is an initiative of VISION 2020 UK, an umbrella organisation with more than 40 members, which aims to bring about greater collaboration between organisations in the UK which focus on visual impairment. Our work in helping people with sight loss to get out and about contributed to Outcome Three of the UKVS – to have a society in which people with sight loss can fully participate.

We recruited external-facing roles concentrating on partnership working such as the Collaboration Development Manager in Central Office and the Engagement roles embedded in the mobility teams. We started to see the benefit of this in our ability to reach and influence other organisations.

As well as making important links with the visual impairment sector, we worked hard to develop collaborations with organisations in other sectors. Our work with the police forces across the UK for example, significantly enhanced our ability to change the legislation

regarding dog attacks on guide dogs as well as to develop service level agreements with each force to determine the way guide dog owners would be assisted following an attack. For their leadership in this work, Northamptonshire Police Force was awarded our Collaboration of the Year award at the 2014 Guide Dogs Annual Awards.

We were one of four charities to successfully win a national partnership to work with the Scouts. Working alongside Leonard Cheshire under the theme of disability, this four-year partnership gives us the opportunity to benefit from the Scouts' support in a variety of practical activities to make a real difference to our work.

We continued to develop our relationships with local and national organisations to ensure that individuals with sight loss have the appropriate mobility training to get to work, socialise and conduct daily tasks.

Our Executive Board supported the importance of collaboration by committing to work with the Institute of Collaborative Working to adopt the principles of the collaborative standard, BS11000. As Executive Network Members of this institution, Guide Dogs has agreed to work at the highest level of partnership, working with other organisations, across all sectors, to strengthen our organisational aims and reach.

The successful launch in November 2014 of the Cities Unlocked programme Phase 1 demonstrated the benefits of collaboration. The partnership included not only the core relationship with Microsoft and Future Cities Catapult, but also Reading Borough Council, Network

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Rail, First Great Western, Reading Buses and Tesco.

We worked with Network Rail on the redesign of Reading Station to ensure that it was inclusive for all. This was opened by Her Majesty the Queen in July 2014 when our collaboration and hard work was recognised.

We were a successful partner in the 'Online today bid' led by the RNIB Group in gaining funding to train those with sight loss on technology as it becomes ever present and important within society.

Internationally we work with others through the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF), an organisation that exists to maintain standards in guide dog training around the world through assessment and accreditation of existing guide dog training schools and supporting the development of new Guide Dogs organisations. We have several staff operating as Assessors and also have representation on the IGDF Board.

**Plans for the future:** Cities Unlocked: we will continue to strengthen our collaboration with existing group partners. We will also have the potential to work with organisations such as John Lewis and Barclays, who, with their Digital Eagles programme, can enhance our understanding of commercial partnerships. Using the experiences learned from Cities Unlocked we will sponsor a stream at the Vision UK 2015 conference focusing on 'Social Inclusion: transforming lives through digital technology'. We will invite several of the partners from the Cities Unlocked programme to make presentations with us.

We will use the joint funding we secured

with Action for Blind People, RNIB, SENSE and Action on Hearing Loss to deliver a programme assisting people with visual impairment to become more able to plan and book journeys using public transport online. This will help them to become more independent and involved in social, professional and community activities.

We will expand the My Guide service by making closer connections with Action for Blind People. Their Living With Sight Loss and Finding Your Feet courses provide early intervention to people recently diagnosed with sight loss. The courses help them to make the right choices and adjustments to enable them to lead independent lives. We have agreed that Guide Dogs will deliver the mobility section of the scheme across England, with the potential to add a My Guide Friends and Family sighted guide session to enhance the offering.

We will roll out the principles of the Collaborative Working standard, BS11000 across the organisation.

We will ensure that we create Memoranda of Understanding with key partners to work on specific projects to benefit people with sight loss. We will aim to ensure that we are working with key strategic partners across all sectors so that we can continue to be leaders in the field of mobility and independence for those with sight loss.

### Fundraising

We are reliant on the goodwill of our supporters and volunteers to raise funds to help people with sight loss live the lives they choose. We thank all those who donated money to Guide Dogs to help us support more people with sight loss.

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

Voluntary income increased by 15% (£9.7 million) in spite of a flat economy. Within voluntary income, legacy income exceeded our expectations with £34.9 million raised (4% increase on 2013). We also saw growth in income from all our fundraising initiatives compared with 2013: Donor-based fundraising grew by £6.3 million (26% growth); our volunteers raised an extra £1million (17% growth).

### Achievements and performance:

- Guide Dogs was chosen as one of six national charities for the 2014 ITV Text Santa Appeal. Text Santa raised more than £1 million and generated extensive media and public relations coverage, with the show attracting 5.4 million viewers at its peak.
- Our volunteers raised money by managing 4,308 collections, exceeding previous amounts raised.
- Our annual Guide Dogs Awards gala evening in December was hosted by Adrian Chiles and attracted many celebrities. The Awards celebrated the achievements of our guide dog partnerships and the dedication of our volunteers, and raised more than £0.2 million.
- We recruited 34 new supporter groups all of which are growing into strong, local community fundraising and engagement teams. There was a greater requirement than anticipated to support the rejuvenation of some groups whose numbers had declined which impacted on our objective of opening 60 new groups.
- We won a new corporate partnership with NFU Mutual and we are proud to be their 2015 charity of the year.
- Our volunteers hosted around 2,000 events during Guide Dogs Week 2014 - the highest number to date.
- Our long-term partnership with Specsavers continued to go from strength-to-strength with their

invaluable support of Guide Dogs Week.

- 2,080 participants took part in a challenge event raising hundreds of thousands of pounds.
- 627 schools raised funds for Guide Dogs and more than 300,000 children had the opportunity to meet a guide dog.
- Our events team engaged more than 363,000 people through 11 major high-footfall events, raising the profile of Guide Dogs and raising money at the same time.
- We were proud to be a charity partner of the Bank of England during 2014. The monies raised exceeded our fundraising target.
- Guide Dogs was awarded funding for the first time from the lottery, securing three grants from Awards for All.
- Our regular giving products Lucky Lottery and Sponsor a Puppy performed strongly with income growing by 28%, raising £28 million.
- We recruited more than 200,000 donors across our range of fundraising products.
- Our refreshed sponsored dog walk, Dogs Unite, was successfully launched in June at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London with more than 4,500 people and dogs in attendance. The event generated 31 items of national media coverage. In total, 125 Dogs Unite events took place in 2014.

**Plans for the future:** Our plans for 2015 are ambitious. We are determined to increase revenue, aiming to continue the significant growth in raised voluntary income we have seen over the past five years. (9% growth).

- Our fundraising team will work with volunteers to create new and innovative ways for people to get

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

- involved with Guide Dogs.
- We plan to recruit more than 235,000 donors through direct marketing, our raffle, cash appeals, Sponsor a Puppy and Lucky Lottery.
- We will continue to raise the profile of the Guide Dogs Annual Awards – to take place on 9 December 2015 at the London Hilton Park Lane Hotel - making it bigger and better than before.
- We will open more supporter groups for volunteers to raise money for Guide Dogs.
- We will increase the promotion of our Fundraise for Us packs giving people who want to support us, ideas about how they can raise funds.
- We will engage more schools and businesses with Guide Dogs.

### People

To achieve our goals of helping more people with sight loss lead independent lives, our people, both staff and volunteers, need to be the best they can be.

**Achievements and performance:** At the end of 2014, we had 1,368 members of staff. We had 14,660 Guide Dogs volunteers, carrying out 25,000 roles.

Our people are dedicated and skilled at what they do. In 2014 we continued to invest in the training of our staff and volunteers, and in particular, continuing our programme of development for our leaders and managers. We saw the results of this investment as illustrated by our staff engagement survey, which saw increased engagement by our staff in these and other key areas.

In January, we announced that Guide Dogs Northern Ireland was successful in achieving the Investing in Volunteers

standard.

Rewarding our staff and volunteers for their efforts has never been more important. In 2014 our People Awards saw staff and volunteers receive awards for excelling in areas represented by our values such as customer focused, and inclusive and embracing. We saw a record number of nominations for both our staff and volunteers. We worked hard with colleagues who are blind or partially sighted to strive to become an exemplar organisation for people with a disability. Our access and inclusion group made significant progress in 2014 in areas such as access to work and assistive technology.

In 2014 we carried out audits, gathered feedback from relevant staff and volunteers, and analysed the findings to ensure that we continue to highlight where improvements can be made. We set measures in motion to make this happen.

**Plans for the future:** We will continue our journey to become a customer-focused, person-centred organisation by upskilling our people. We will ensure they are flexible and adaptable to the changing services Guide Dogs will offer as we fulfil our strategy.

We will continue to diversify our staff and volunteers to reflect the communities which we serve. Through the second Volunteer Impact Assessment, we will gather and analyse the feedback from our volunteers to assess the difference volunteering makes to Guide Dogs.

We will continue to strive for excellence in customer service from the point when a potential volunteer or employee first enquires about Guide Dogs.

# Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

## Sustainability

We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our operation and wherever possible, will incorporate sustainable practices in our services. We aim to make the right choices in the way we work and in doing so will:

- Consider sustainability when managing our properties, utility supplies, transport, equipment and materials.
- Implement reduction programmes and actively manage carbon emissions from the energy we use in our buildings and the fuel we use in our transport.
- Implement waste reduction, reuse and recycle programmes.
- Comply with all legal environmental requirements and ensure that measures are in place to prevent pollution.
- Engage with our suppliers on sustainability.
- Build relationships and seek opportunities to support current and future generations of our stakeholders.
- Share knowledge, experience and best practice.
- Be fully transparent with all of our sustainability facts and figures.
- Conserve the biodiversity of our estates.

We encourage staff and volunteers to consider all aspects of sustainability through our awareness programme, 'A different way of thinking'. Sustainable principles are considered in the design of new, and also in the refurbishment of existing, buildings and with the choice of the vehicle fleet.

The Trustees and Executive Board of Guide Dogs recognise the importance of

environmental sustainability and view this as an integral part of Guide Dogs' future strategy.

## Financial review

### Overview

In 2014 incoming resources exceeded resources expended by £7.1 million (2013: £10.4 million excess of resources expended over incoming resources) and our total funds increased by £8.7 million (2013: £6.6 million decrease).

The surplus in 2014 was due to the sale of the obsolete Wokingham property, generating a profit of £17.1 million. Without this one-off benefit we would have recorded a deficit of £10.0 million, resulting from continuing planned investment in fundraising and service delivery growth. Our income growth plans continue to bear fruit, and this, along with close control over obtaining value for money from the resources we expend means that we are on track to bringing the organisation to a more robust financial position.

### Income

Income totalled £101.1 million in 2014, up £26.2 million on the prior year, including the £17.1 million one-off benefit from the sale of the Wokingham property. Without this, income would have been £84.0 million, up £9.1 million or 12% on 2013. The largest constituent of this is voluntary income. This totalled £75.9 million in 2014, £9.7 million or 15% higher than in 2013, primarily due to an increase of £6.4 million in donor based fundraising, reflecting the investment we have been putting into growing our donor database.

# Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

## Expenditure

Resources expended in 2014 totalled £94.0 million, £8.7 million more than the prior year. The larger elements of this include:

- Costs of generating funds. The additional investment in fundraising brought the total to £36.7 million (2013: £31.2 million).
- Costs of the provision of guide dogs and other adult mobility services. At £48.2 million this was up £1.4 million on the prior year.

## Net income/(expenditure) for the year

Net income for the year before other recognised gains and losses therefore totalled £7.1 million (2013: net expenditure for the year of £10.4 million). The Board of Trustees' overall aim is to operate at least at break even, but recognises that in times of service expansion or general economic recession this may not always be achieved.

## Other recognised gains and losses

Other recognised gains and losses arose from two sources:

- Net unrealised gains on investments. These totalled £1.9 million (2013: £3.4 million).
- The defined benefit pension scheme. Net actuarial losses of £0.3 million (2013: £0.4 million gains) were recognised.

## Funds

Taking into account all the above recognised gains and losses in the year, overall funds increased by £8.7 million (2013: decreased by £6.6 million), to £96.2

million. These funds comprise four elements: free reserves, designated funds, restricted funds and endowment funds. Each of these categories is described as follows.

## Free reserves

We define free reserves as comprising general funds, the revaluation reserve and the pension reserve deficit. Total free reserves at the end of 2014 amounted to £51.1 million (2013: £40.5 million). When someone becomes a guide dog owner we make a commitment to provide them with a guide dog for as long as they require one. As it takes between 20 to 24 months to train a guide dog and as the average working life of guide dogs is between six and seven years, a client may require eight or more dogs in a lifetime. Furthermore, the highly specialised nature of our work means that we have to train our own staff. To recruit and fully train a Guide Dog Mobility Instructor, for example, takes over three years. Also, the expenditure on our buildings and supporting infrastructure is fixed in the medium term which, together with our breeding and training requirements, results in the necessity for a long-term cost planning horizon. We estimate that the total cost of our commitment is in excess of £200 million, and is made in the context of our income being derived primarily from voluntary giving, particularly legacies, which can fluctuate significantly.

To mitigate the risk to the delivery of our commitment to each guide dog owner, it is the Board of Trustees' view that free reserves should normally be maintained at a level equivalent to between one and two years' operating costs.

However, the Board of Trustees

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

recognises that there may be occasions where investment leads to a reduction in free reserves to a lower amount, with such investments only being undertaken when the Board of Trustees believes that free reserves can then be re-established at the policy level within a reasonable period of time.

Free reserves have been at a level below the equivalent of one year's operating costs since 2011. The Board of Trustees has carefully reviewed forward projections of Guide Dogs' financial position and is confident that the organisation will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due, while maintaining services. The Board of Trustees is closely monitoring performance against the forward projections so that remedial action can be taken if it becomes clear that the assumptions underlying the projections cease to be realistic.

### Designated funds

Designated funds are unrestricted but have been set aside by the Board of Trustees for a particular purpose. Guide Dogs maintains two designated funds:

- The **Fixed Assets Fund** represents funds allocated to tangible fixed assets such as property, plant and equipment. This has decreased from £46.0 million to £44.2 million during the year.
- The **Research Fund** provides funding for ophthalmic, canine and psycho-social research. The year-end balance on this fund was £0.3 million (2013: £0.3 million).

### Restricted funds

These are unexpended funds that have been donated to Guide Dogs with specific conditions attached to their use.

At 31 December 2014 these funds totalled £0.1 million (2013: £0.3 million).

### Endowment funds

These are funds that have been donated subject to the condition that the capital must remain unspent, in perpetuity. Income from the investment of these funds may be used for unrestricted purposes. At 31 December 2014 these funds totalled £0.5 million (2013: £0.4 million).

### Tangible fixed assets

The movements in tangible fixed assets during the year are summarised in Note 5 to the Financial Statements. No major investment has taken place in 2014, and none is planned for 2015. Guide Dogs owns several surplus properties, the disposal of which is being pursued. Early in 2014 the old training school site at Wokingham was sold, realising net proceeds of £18.0 million, compared to a net book value of £0.9 million.

### Investment policy

Guide Dogs' investment policy is:

(i) To protect the value of its investments while seeking an appropriate return. In order to achieve this outcome at appropriately low levels of risk and volatility, investments are selected that seek to produce a return of LIBOR plus 4% per annum over three-year rolling periods.

(ii) Not to invest directly in any company with a significant interest in any activity that runs contrary to Guide Dogs' charitable objectives and mission. The Board of Trustees considers this to be a prudent policy which challenges managers to produce excellent results.

The investment portfolio is managed on

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

an unconstrained basis in two segments, by Standard Life Investments and Newton Investment Management, under the control of Guide Dogs' Investment Committee. The two managers were selected for their contrasting styles, in order to diversify overall risk.

At the beginning of the year investments were valued at £60.2 million. During the year a net £5.9 million of funds were withdrawn from the portfolio and investment gains of £1.9 million were achieved. As a result, the portfolio was valued at £56.2 million at the end of the year.

Against the benchmark target return (LIBOR plus 4%) for the rolling three years to 31 December 2014 of 4.6%, Standard Life Investments has achieved a return of 7.3% and Newton Investment Management 4.8%, producing an overall return of 5.9%.

### Guide Dogs' pension schemes

Guide Dogs operates two funded pension schemes for its staff: a defined benefit and a defined contribution scheme. The former scheme was closed to future accrual on 31 December 2012. A valuation of this scheme for accounting purposes, under FRS 17, valued the deficit at 31 December 2014 at £10.9 million (2013: £22.2 million). The major elements of this £11.3 million decrease in the deficit were £3.5 million of net interest in the scheme, and the £6.7 million additional payment from Guide Dogs toward the elimination of the deficit. The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was at 31 December 2012. This showed a deficit of £54.3 million calculated on a funding basis. Annual payments of £6.7 million through to 2023 have been agreed with the scheme's trustees. The defined contribution

scheme has been in existence since 1 April 2011, and during 2013 also became the vehicle for the auto-enrolment offering to staff.

### Risk management and internal control

The Board reviews the major risks the charity faces as part of the annual business planning process and has established effective and efficient systems to manage these. It is satisfied that the arrangements for managing these risks, combined with the continual review of internal controls and the reserves policy, will ensure that sufficient resources are available to maintain services for the foreseeable future.

Performance against the objectives set out in the five year business plan, including management of significant risks, is monitored regularly by the Board. The Board also ensures that systems for internal control are in place. These systems are reviewed as part of an internal audit programme. The systems are designed to safeguard the charity's assets, ensure that proper accounting records are maintained and provide reliable financial information.

Key elements of Guide Dogs' control systems include the following:

- The Board meets at least four times a year. A number of matters are specifically reserved for its approval.
- There is a clear organisational structure with appropriate levels of accountability and reporting lines. The Board approves the delegation of financial authority to the Chief Executive.
- The risk management framework is used to identify and assess new and current major business risks. It prioritises them in terms of impact and probability of occurrence and then

## Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2014

identifies and implements efficient controls to manage them and monitor their effect.

Throughout 2014 the organisation continued to monitor significant risks. These included financial risks relating to income generation, the investment portfolio and the defined benefit pension scheme. Other risks included working with young people and vulnerable adults, and a failure to recruit and retain qualified and skilled staff and volunteers.

**This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 7 July 2015 and signed on its behalf by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Stewart', is positioned below the text. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

**Chairman: John Stewart**

# Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

The Board of Trustees of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association ('the Board') presents its Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2014. These have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) – Accounting and Reporting by Charities (revised 2005).

## Corporate information

The Association operates under the abbreviated name of Guide Dogs. Guide Dogs is a registered charity (Number 209617) in England and Wales and number SC038979 in Scotland) and was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee (registered in England and Wales number 291646), on 30 August 1934. Its Central Office which is also its Registered Office, is Hillfields, Burghfield Common, Reading, Berkshire RG7 3YG.

Guide Dogs is governed by its Articles of Association, which were last amended on 20 July 2013.

Guide Dogs is a company limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the company being wound up each member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1) towards the costs of dissolution and liabilities of the Association.

## Public benefit

The Board has paid due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

The objects and aims of Guide Dogs fall

within the subsection of the Charities Act 2011 related to the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. No person who is blind or partially sighted is prohibited from applying for assistance from the services we provide on the grounds of financial circumstances. We believe that Guide Dogs' information, research and campaigning activities have also directly benefited people who are blind or partially sighted.

## Structure, governance and management

### Members of the Board

The members of the Board as at 7 July 2015, who are both Directors of the company and Trustees of the charity (the "Trustees"), were as follows:

John Stewart BA, FCIB, ACII - Chairman  
Pat Stafford BA (Hons) - Vice Chairman  
David Anderson BVMS, MVM, MRCVS  
Amanda Ariss BA (Hons), MA (Dist)  
David J Bagley FCA, CF  
Clare Black BSc (Hons)  
John Everitt BSc, MSc CEng, FICE  
Mike Hughes\*  
Amar Latif BSc (Hons)  
Dr Mike Nussbaum\* BSc, PhD, Honorary  
Doctor of the Open University  
Polly Williams ACA, BA (Hons)  
John Wrighthouse BSc (Hons), MA, FCIPD

\* Guide dog owner.

Prof John Hillbourne\*, Norma Johnston, Alan Park and Rowena Lusty all retired on 4 August 2014.

The Trustees are elected by the members of Guide Dogs at the Annual General

## Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

Meeting or appointed by the Board to fill any vacancies arising during the year. Recruitment takes place through a sub-committee of the Board with clear terms of reference, and candidates are sought to provide the Board with a full range of relevant skills relating to the business of the charity. Diverse applications are actively sought, particularly from people with a visual impairment.

Trustees serve a three-year term of office before retiring and are eligible to stand for re-election for a maximum of two further three-year terms of office. Exceptionally, a fourth and final term may be served if there is a specific need, agreed by the Board.

On appointment, all new Trustees have personalised induction programmes. These are designed to cover the main operational framework of the charity, including its finances and future plans and objectives. New Trustees are also encouraged to visit one of the four Guide Dog Training Schools and other teams, and are required to attend a staff and volunteer induction workshop, covering areas such as safeguarding.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for the activities of Guide Dogs, advised by the Chief Executive and his Executive Board.

We have three committees; these (and their chairmen) are as follows:

Audit (Polly Williams)  
Investment (Bruce Gordon\*)  
Remuneration Committee (Pat Stafford)

\* Independent Member.

The policy framework sets out the clear

terms of reference for the committees and the Board receives regular reports on their activities. The Board has established a clear policy and procedures for dealing with conflicts of interest and the authorisation thereof in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines.

Trustees of the Board and independent committee members do not receive any remuneration for their services to the charity.

### **Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The Trustees (who are also directors of Guide Dogs for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed.

## Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in England and Wales governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements and other information included in Annual Reports may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

### Management

The Association's Executive Officers are the Chief Executive and the Executive Board. Together, they are accountable for driving the delivery of the Association's vision and strategy. The Executive Board is responsible for the day-to-day management of Guide Dogs, acting under delegated authority given to them by the Board. It is important for the Association to have a highly effective leadership team in place in these senior roles. The members of the Executive Board as at 7 July 2015 were:

Richard Leaman, CB, OBE, Chief Executive  
Jayne George, Director of Fundraising and Marketing  
Mike Holt, Director of People and Business Services  
Tim Lowth, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance  
Steve Vaid, Director of Mobility Services (Deputy CEO)

### Executive pay policy statement

The Association is committed to greater transparency over pay in the voluntary sector and supports the recommendations in the National Council of Voluntary Organisations' (NCVO) Report of the Inquiry into Charity Senior Executive Pay, and for that reason is publishing information on pay policy and remuneration levels for its chief officers in this annual report and the Association's website.

The current pay and terms and conditions for Executives were introduced in 2011 and are determined by the Association's Remuneration Committee operating as a sub-committee of the Board. This pay policy forms part of the contracts of employment of the Chief Executive and Executive Board.

The policy aims to:

- Develop and sustain a high performance culture from the top of the Association.
- Recruit and retain the talented people needed to maintain or improve the Association's already high performance and lead the organisation through the challenging changes we are facing.
- Recognise Executives for their personal contributions.

# Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

There are a number of principles that underpin the Board's approach to Executive pay:

- The amount paid should reflect the market for comparable jobs in comparable organisations, the performance of the organisation and the skills and contribution of the individual performing the role.
- Increases to pay are 'at risk' because they depend on delivering results; this means it is a performance-related pay scheme.
- Performance is defined in a rounded way, including not only achievement of annual targets but also leadership and other behaviours as well as success in developing the capability and services of the Association over the longer term.

## Salary ranges

Executive roles are allocated to a salary range based on a number of factors including the level of knowledge, skills and experience required and the responsibilities and accountabilities associated with the position. This assessment of the size of each Executive role is carried out by the Hay Group. Each Executive Director is paid within a salary range applicable to their post, and progression within that range is dependent on their performance.

Salary ranges are reviewed annually and any decision to change them is taken by the Remuneration Committee. As part of the review, consideration is given to the level of pay in the sector using benchmark data collected by the Hay Group.

## Other benefits

Benefits for Directors are in line with benefits available to all staff. This includes a flexible benefits allowance of up to 3% of salary.

Employer's pension contributions are conditional on employee contributions and the same as equivalent contribution levels for all staff.

Across the Association as a whole, the ratio between median salary and highest salary at the end of 2014 was 1:5

# Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

## Total remuneration of Executive Board 2014

The table below shows the total remuneration of the Executive Board. This includes salary, allowances in lieu of pension scheme participation, benefits in kind, and pension contributions.

Name	Role	Total remuneration
Richard Leaman	Group Chief Executive	£137,817
Jayne George	Director of Fundraising and Marketing	£125,322
Tim Lowth	Director of Finance, Planning and Performance	£107,932
Steve Vaid	Director of Mobility Services / Deputy CEO	£98,918
Mike Holt	Director of People and Business Services	£96,883

## Related parties

Guide Dogs is sole member, or owns the entire issued share capital, of its seven subsidiary undertakings:

- Blind Children UK (formerly National Blind Children's Society), acquired on 29 April 2013 is a charity providing services to blind or partially sighted children and their families.
- The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Trading Company) Limited is the charity's trading subsidiary.
- Guide Dogs UK Limited operates as a design and new build company for Guide Dogs.
- GDBA Community Care Services Limited, GDBA (Pension Fund Trustee) Limited and Guide Dogs Limited and NBCS Blind Limited were dormant during 2014.

The financial performance of these subsidiaries is disclosed in Note 14 to the Financial Statements.

## Employee involvement and employment of disabled persons

Management is committed to transparency in its work and to including employees appropriately in decisions. Communication with employees is implemented through conventional line-management, team meetings, management visits to locations, conferences and away days, internal publications and extensive access to the charity's intranet and e-mail system. There is direct and formal consultation with employees on issues of concern to them and the elected National Staff Consultative Committee meets with management regularly.

Guide Dogs has been awarded the Two Ticks symbol by Jobcentre Plus. The symbol identifies those employers who have committed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees.

# Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2014 (incorporating the Directors' Report)

## Provision of information to Auditor

Each of the persons who is a Trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- So far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware.
- He / she has taken all the steps that he / she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself / herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

**This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 7 July 2015 and signed on its behalf by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Stewart', written in a cursive style.

**Chairman: John Stewart**

## **Principal Advisors**

### **Advisors**

#### **Auditor**

Deloitte LLP  
2 New Street Square  
London EC4A 3BZ

#### **Bankers**

HSBC Bank plc  
25 High Street  
Windsor  
Berkshire SL4 1LN

Barclays  
90-93 Broad Street  
Reading  
RG1 2AP

#### **Investment Fund Managers**

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160 Queen Victoria Street  
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1 George Street  
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# Independent Auditor's report to the Trustees and Members of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

We have audited the financial statements of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association for the year ended 31 December 2014 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and the Company Balance Sheets, the Cash Flow Statement, the Accounting Policies and the related notes 1 to 17. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 44(1) (c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and the Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Auditor

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the

charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1) (c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

## Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Group's and the parent charitable company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the annual report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on,

# Independent Auditor's report to the Trustees and Members of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

## Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2014 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

## Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

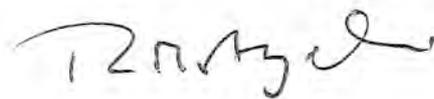
In our opinion the information given in the Strategic Report and the Trustees' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities

Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept proper and adequate accounting records or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us;
- the parent charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records or returns;
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.



Reza Motazed (Senior statutory auditor)  
for and on behalf of Deloitte LLP  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory  
Auditor London

 July 2015

Deloitte LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006 and consequently to act as the auditor of a registered charity.

**Consolidated statement of financial activities  
incorporating an income and expenditure account  
for the year ended 31 December 2014**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £m	Restricted Funds £m	Endowment Funds £m	Total 2014 £m	Total 2013 £m
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>						
Voluntary income		70.0	5.9	-	75.9	66.2
Activities for generating funds		6.0	-	-	6.0	5.2
<b>Investment income</b>		1.3	-	-	1.3	1.5
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>		0.7	-	-	0.7	0.6
<b>Other incoming resources</b>		17.2	-	-	17.2	1.4
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	1	95.2	5.9	-	101.1	74.9
<b>Resources expended</b>						
<b>Cost of generating funds</b>		(36.7)	-	-	(36.7)	(31.2)
<b>Cost of charitable activities</b>						
Provision of guide dog and other adult mobility services		(42.4)	(5.8)	-	(48.2)	(46.8)
Provision of other children's services		(2.6)	(0.3)	-	(2.9)	(1.6)
Research and development	3	(0.5)	-	-	(0.5)	(0.4)
Advocacy and awareness		(4.8)	-	-	(4.8)	(4.0)
<b>Total charitable expenditure</b>		(50.3)	(6.1)	-	(56.4)	(52.8)
Governance costs		(0.9)	-	-	(0.9)	(1.3)
<b>Total resources expended</b>	2	(87.9)	(6.1)	-	(94.0)	(85.3)
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year before other recognised gains (losses)</b>		7.3	(0.2)	-	7.1	(10.4)
Net unrealised gains on investments		1.8	-	0.1	1.9	3.4
Actuarial (loss)/gain on defined benefit pension scheme	15	(0.3)	-	-	(0.3)	0.4
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in funds</b>		8.8	(0.2)	0.1	8.7	(6.6)
Fund balance at 1 January		86.8	0.3	0.4	87.5	94.1
Fund balances at 31 December		95.6	0.1	0.5	96.2	87.5

All results are derived from continuing operations.

The parent charity, The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association has gross income of £98.8 million (2013: £75.9 million) and a result of £12.3 million surplus (2013: £5.7 million deficit) for the year.

The net increase in funds for the financial year under the historical cost accounting convention, adjusted for the revaluation of fixed assets but excluding the movement in market value of Investments, is £8.3 million (2013: net decrease in funds £7.0 million) (Note 6).

The accounting policies and notes on pages 35 to 50 form part of these financial statements

## Consolidated and charity balance sheets at 31 December 2014

	Notes	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	5	44.2	46.0	44.2	46.0
Investments	6	56.2	60.2	56.7	60.7
		100.4	106.2	100.9	106.7
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock	7	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1
Debtors	8	12.3	7.5	17.1	9.0
Cash at bank and in hand		3.9	4.0	3.2	3.0
		16.4	11.8	20.4	12.1
<b>Creditors</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	9	(9.4)	(7.5)	(9.0)	(7.1)
<b>Net current assets</b>					
		7.0	4.3	11.4	5.0
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>					
		107.4	110.5	112.3	111.7
<b>Creditors</b>					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	10	(0.3)	(0.8)	(0.3)	(0.9)
<b>Net assets excluding pensions deficit</b>					
		107.1	109.7	112.0	110.8
Pension fund deficit	15	(10.9)	(22.2)	(10.9)	(22.2)
<b>Net assets</b>					
		96.2	87.5	101.1	88.6
<b>Funds</b>					
General funds		52.1	45.7	57.0	46.9
Revaluation reserve		9.9	17.0	9.9	17.0
Pension reserve deficit		(10.9)	(22.2)	(10.9)	(22.2)
<b>Total free reserves</b>					
		51.1	40.5	56.0	41.7
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed assets		44.2	46.0	44.2	46.0
Research		0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>Total designated funds</b>					
		44.5	46.3	44.5	46.3
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>					
		95.6	86.8	100.5	88.0
Restricted funds		0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2
Endowment		0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4
<b>Total funds</b>					
	11, 16	96.2	87.5	101.1	88.6

The Financial Statements of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (registered company number 291646) were approved by the Board of Trustees on 7 July 2015 and signed on its behalf by



Chairman:



Trustee:

The accounting policies and notes on pages 35 to 50 form part of these financial statements

## Consolidated cash flow statement for the year ended 31 December 2014

	Notes	2014 £m	2013 £m
Net cash outflow from operating activities	17	<u>(22.6)</u>	<u>(19.4)</u>
<b>Return on investment and servicing of finance</b>			
Investment income received		<u>1.3</u>	<u>1.5</u>
<b>Capital expenditure and financial investment</b>			
Payments for tangible fixed assets		(2.8)	(2.1)
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets		18.1	1.8
Net divestment from investment portfolio		<u>5.9</u>	<u>15.6</u>
		<u>21.2</u>	<u>15.3</u>
<b>Decrease in cash in the year</b>		<u>(0.1)</u>	<u>(2.6)</u>
Net cash at 1 January		4.0	6.6
<b>Decrease in the year</b>		<u>(0.1)</u>	<u>(2.6)</u>
Net cash at 31 December		<u><u>3.9</u></u>	<u><u>4.0</u></u>

The accounting policies and notes on pages 35 to 50 form part of these financial statements

## Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these Financial Statements are as follows:

### **i. Basis of accounting**

The Financial Statements of the Association have been prepared using the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain investment and fixed assets, and are drawn up in line with the Companies Act 2006, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' published in March 2005 and applicable United Kingdom accounting standards.

The group accounts consolidate the accounts of the charity and its subsidiary companies. As provided by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006, no separate income and expenditure account is presented for the charity. The subsidiaries' profits are transferred to the Charity under Gift Aid or deed of covenant. Acquisitions are accounted for under the acquisition method.

The Board of Trustees considers that there are sufficient reserves at 31 December 2014 to manage any foreseeable downturn in the UK and global economy. The Board also considers that there is a reasonable expectation that The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and for this reason the Board continues to adopt the 'going concern' basis in preparing the Financial Statements.

### **ii. Incoming resources**

The income of fundraising branches and other donations is accounted for on a receivable basis. Income from raffles and draws is accounted for at the time of

cash receipt.

Legacies are accounted for when notified, providing the amount can be reliably ascertained and that ultimate receipt is reasonably certain.

Investment income is accounted for on an accruals basis.

### **iii. Resources expended**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

Grants payable are recognised when a legal or operationally binding commitment has been made to make the grant payment.

The costs of charitable activities and generating funds include relevant direct costs incurred and the direct costs of staff employed on the activity, together with a share of overheads and support costs calculated in proportion to the number of staff employed in this area.

Governance costs relate to the direct costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the costs of internal and external audit, secretariat and other related costs.

The cost of irrecoverable Value Added Tax is included within relevant expenditure.

### **iv. Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets, with an historic cost of £1,000 or more excluding Value Added Tax, are stated in the balance sheet at cost, with the exception of freehold land and buildings which are stated at historic valuation (see below), less depreciation, on a straight-line basis, at the following annual rates:

## Accounting policies

Freehold land	Nil
Freehold buildings	2½% - 5%
Furniture and equipment	10% - 20%
Motor vehicles	20%
Computers	33%

Assets in the course of construction are not depreciated.

Software development costs are expensed.

Guide Dogs first applied Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 15 'Tangible Fixed Assets' in the year ended 31 December 1998, adopting the transitional provision to not revalue the freehold land and buildings on a periodic basis in the future; therefore this valuation has not been updated.

Leasehold properties are depreciated over their lease terms on a straight-line basis.

### v. Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. The value of unit trusts is the bid price of the units.

It is the charity's policy to keep valuations up to date such that when investments are sold there is no realised gain or loss arising. As a result the Statement of Financial Activities does not distinguish between the valuation adjustments relating to sales and those relating to continued holdings as they are together treated as changes in the value of the investment portfolio throughout the year.

Investments in subsidiary companies are stated at cost, less any provision for impairment.

### vi. Stocks

Stocks have been valued at the lower of cost on a first in first out basis and net

realisable value.

### vii. Pension costs

Guide Dogs operates two pension schemes:

(a) A defined contribution scheme which came into existence on 1 April 2011, and is open to all employees. The pension charge in relation to this scheme is based upon employer's contributions payable in the year.

(b) A defined benefit pension scheme for the majority of its employees who commenced working for Guide Dogs before 1 April 2011. The pension charge in relation to this scheme is based on annual valuations undertaken by the scheme Actuary in compliance with the provisions of FRS17. The scheme was closed to future accrual on 31 December 2012.

In addition there is an unfunded pension liability in respect of a limited number of ex-employees. The liability in relation to these employees is recognised in accordance with actuarial valuation.

### viii. Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are expensed on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

### ix. Fund balances and transfers

The charity has three permanent endowments, which have to be retained as capital in perpetuity. However, income arising from these funds is wholly unrestricted.

Restricted funds are those which must be applied in accordance with the purpose specified by the donor. Expenditure relating to these purposes is therefore charged directly to the relevant fund.

## Accounting policies

The unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the Trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Such funds include designated funds where the Trustees, at their discretion, have created a fund for a specific purpose. Transfers of funds from general unrestricted funds to designated funds are approved by the Trustees. Further details of each fund are disclosed in Note 11.

### **x. Taxation**

Guide Dogs, as a registered charity, is exempt from corporation tax under Chapter 3 of Part 11 to the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of the Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that surpluses are applied to its charitable purposes. No corporation tax charge has arisen in the charity's subsidiaries, due to their policies of gifting all taxable profits to Guide Dogs each year. Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 1. Incoming resources

	2014 £m	2013 £m
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>		
<b>Voluntary income</b>		
Community fundraising	7.0	6.0
Donor based fundraising	31.3	24.9
Corporate and trust income	2.7	1.6
Legacies	34.9	33.7
	<hr/> 75.9	<hr/> 66.2
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>		
Raffles and draws	3.5	3.5
Lotteries	1.1	0.8
Other	1.4	0.9
	<hr/> 6.0	<hr/> 5.2
<b>Investment Income</b>	<hr/> 1.3	<hr/> 1.5
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>		
Sale of rehabilitation services under contract	0.4	0.2
Ancillary training	0.3	0.4
	<hr/> 0.7	<hr/> 0.6
Other incoming resources*	<hr/> 17.2	<hr/> 1.4
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<hr/> <hr/> 101.1	<hr/> <hr/> 74.9

\*2014 includes the profit on sale of the Wokingham site (£17.1 million).

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 2. Resources expended

	Direct Costs £m	Support Costs £m	Total 2014 £m	Total 2013 £m
<b>Costs of generating voluntary income</b>				
Community fundraising	5.0	0.5	5.5	4.8
Donor based fundraising	20.2	0.5	20.7	17.4
Corporate and trust income	0.7	0.1	0.8	0.8
Fundraising development and administration	1.6	0.2	1.8	1.5
Legacy marketing and administration	2.5	0.1	2.6	2.6
	30.0	1.4	31.4	27.1
<b>Cost of fundraising trading</b>				
Costs of goods sold and other costs	1.2	-	1.2	0.9
Raffles and draws	3.0	-	3.0	2.4
Lotteries	0.8	-	0.8	0.3
	5.0	-	5.0	3.6
<b>Investment management fees</b>	0.3	-	0.3	0.5
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>	35.3	1.4	36.7	31.2
<b>Charitable expenditure</b>				
Provision of guide dogs and other adult mobility services	41.2	7.0	48.2	46.8
Provision of children's services	2.5	0.4	2.9	1.6
Research and development	0.4	0.1	0.5	0.4
Advocacy and awareness	4.4	0.4	4.8	4.0
	48.5	7.9	56.4	52.8
Governance costs	0.8	0.1	0.9	1.3
<b>Total resources expended</b>	84.6	9.4	94.0	85.3

Resources expended include:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Operating lease charges		
Other – land and buildings	0.6	0.6
Depreciation charged in the year	3.6	3.5
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Fees payable to the charity's auditor for:		
The audit of the charity's annual financial statements	48.8	47.6
The audit of the charity's subsidiaries pursuant to legislation	13.6	13.3

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 3. Research

Research and development comprises strategic, market, consumer and scientific research and technology development. Total research and development expenditure including grants amounted to £0.5 million in 2014 (2013: £0.4 million). No new research grants were made in 2014 (2013: 1 grant for £0.1m to University of Liverpool).

### 4. Trustees and employees

The trustees and persons connected with them have not received, obtained or waived any remuneration or other financial benefits for the year directly or indirectly from Guide Dogs (2013 Nil:). Travelling and subsistence expenses were reimbursed in respect of 16 trustees, totalling £9,784 (2013: 16; £12,102).

#### Staff costs

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Wages and salaries	35.3	32.6
Social security costs	3.4	3.2
Other pension costs excluding pension scheme actuarial loss (see Note 15)	3.0	3.1
Sub total	41.7	38.9
Other staff related costs	6.0	4.0
<b>Total</b>	47.7	42.9

The average number of persons employed during the year ended 31 December 2014 is shown below on full time equivalent basis

	2014 No	2013 No
Fundraising and legacies	128	108
Provision of guide dogs and other adult mobility services	773	752
Provision of other children's services	79	32
Research and development	7	6
Advocacy and awareness	27	28
Management, administration and clerical (indirect)	226	232
	1,240	1,158

Pension contributions were paid into Guide Dogs' defined contribution scheme for 1,238 employees (2013: 948 employees).

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

Number of employees with emoluments (excluding one-off redundancy payments) exceeding £60,000:

	2014 No	2013 No
£60,001 to £70,000	9	7
£70,001 to £80,000	5	7
£80,001 to £90,000	1	-
£90,001 to £100,000	1	2
£100,001 to £110,000	2	-
£120,001 to £130,000	-	1
£130,001 to £140,000	1	-
	<hr/> 19	<hr/> 17

Pension contributions were paid into the Guide Dogs' defined contribution scheme for the year on behalf of 17 (2013: 16) of the employees with emoluments in excess of £60,000.

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 5. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold properties	Leasehold properties	Furniture, equipment, vehicles and computers	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Group</b>				
<b>Cost or valuation</b>				
As 1 January 2014	53.1	1.0	12.1	66.2
Additions	0.2	-	2.6	2.8
Disposals	(1.2)	-	(1.4)	(2.6)
<b>At 31 December 2014</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>66.4</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
As 1 January 2014	11.7	0.6	7.9	20.2
Provision for year	1.7	0.1	1.8	3.6
Disposals	(0.2)	-	(1.4)	(1.6)
<b>At 31 December 2014</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Net book value 31 December 2014</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>44.2</b>
Net book value 31 December 2013	41.4	0.4	4.2	46.0
<b>Charity</b>				
<b>Cost or valuation</b>				
As 1 January 2014	53.0	1.0	12.2	66.2
Additions	0.2	-	2.6	2.8
Assets transferred from Blind Children UK	-	-	0.1	0.1
Disposals	(1.1)	-	(1.6)	(2.7)
<b>At 31 December 2014</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>66.4</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
As 1 January 2014	11.6	0.6	8.0	20.2
Provision for year	1.7	0.1	1.8	3.6
Depreciation transferred from Blind Children UK	-	-	0.1	0.1
Disposals	(0.1)	-	(1.6)	(1.7)
<b>At 31 December 2014</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Net book value 31 December 2014</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>44.2</b>
Net book value 31 December 2013	41.4	0.4	4.2	46.0

The majority of freehold properties were re-valued as at 31 December 1998 by Weatherall Green & Smith, Chartered Surveyors, on an open market value basis in accordance with guidelines issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

The Central Office freehold property was valued by external valuers, Alder King Property Consultants, as at 6 March 2006 on the basis of Existing Use Value in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Appraisal and Valuation Standards Manual. The external valuer

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

did not consider there to be any significant difference between the Existing Use Value and the Open Market Value as at the date of the valuation. The external valuer responsible for the inspection and preparation of the valuation was Mr R Wheeler BSc FRICS. The depreciated historical cost of the property prior to the valuation was £2.5 million.

The discount rate used in the calculation to arrive at the Value in Use was 4.5%.

The charity's depreciation charge for the year would have been £2.2 million (2013:£2.2 million) compared with the actual charge of £1.8 million (2013:£1.8 million) based on revalued amounts.

### 6. Investments

#### a) Movement in investment during the year

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Market value at 1 January	60.2	72.4	60.7	72.9
Net divestment	(5.9)	(15.6)	(5.9)	(15.6)
Net gain on revaluation	1.9	3.4	1.9	3.4
Market value 31 December	56.2	60.2	56.7	60.7

#### b) Analysis of investments of market value

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Listed investments – United Kingdom	56.2	60.2	56.2	60.2
Investments in subsidiaries	-	-	0.5	0.5
	56.2	60.2	56.7	60.7

#### c) Analysis of investment of cost

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Listed investment – United Kingdom	46.4	43.3	46.4	43.3
Investment in subsidiaries	-	-	0.5	0.5
	46.4	43.3	46.9	43.8

At 31 December 2014 the listed investments included holdings in Standard Life Investment's Global Absolute Return Strategies fund valued at £35.0 million (2013: £35.1 million), and BNY Mellon Pooled Fund valued at £21.2 million (2013: £25.1 million in Newton Investment's Real Return Fund).

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 7. Stocks

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Equipment	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Trading Stock	0.1	0.2	-	-
	<u>0.2</u>	<u>0.3</u>	<u>0.1</u>	<u>0.1</u>

### 8. Debtors

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Tax recoverable	5.9	2.1	5.9	2.1
Other debtors	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2
Trade debtors	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
Due from subsidiary undertakings	-	-	4.8	1.7
Accrued income	4.8	3.4	4.8	3.4
Other prepayments	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4
	<u>12.3</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>17.1</u>	<u>9.0</u>

Included in other debtors are amounts falling due after more than one year. They include non-interest bearing equity loans to employees for housing assistance amounting to £50,000 (2013 £50,000) and a loan of £83,000(2013 £93,000) repayable over 20 years to The Worcestershire Association for the Blind for the development of a resource centre.

### 9. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Trade creditors	4.9	3.0	4.8	2.9
Other creditors	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Tax and social security	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9
Accruals and deferred income	3.3	3.3	3.0	3.0
	<u>9.4</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>9.0</u>	<u>7.1</u>

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 10. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Unfunded pension obligations	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Contracted research grants	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.8
	<u>0.3</u>	<u>0.8</u>	<u>0.3</u>	<u>0.9</u>

The unfunded pension obligations are in respect of four (2013: four) retired members of staff.

### 11. Fund balances

Group	At 1 January 2014 £m	Incoming resources £m	Resources expended £m	Other gains and losses £m	Transfers Between Funds £m	At 31 December 2014 £m
<b>Free reserves</b>	40.5	95.2	(87.9)	1.5	1.8	51.1
Fixed assets	46.0	-	-	-	(1.8)	44.2
Research fund	0.3	-	-	-	-	0.3
<b>Total designated funds</b>	46.3	-	-	-	(1.8)	44.5
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	86.8	95.2	(87.9)	1.5	-	95.6
Restricted funds	0.3	5.9	(6.1)	-	-	0.1
Endowment funds	0.4	-	-	0.1	-	0.5
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>87.5</u>	<u>101.1</u>	<u>(94.0)</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>96.2</u>

Charity	At 1 January 2014 £m	Incoming resources £m	Resources expended £m	Other gains and losses £m	Transfers Between Funds £m	At 31 December 2014 £m
<b>Free reserves</b>	41.7	93.1	(82.1)	1.5	1.8	56.0
Fixed assets	46.0	-	-	-	(1.8)	44.2
Research fund	0.3	-	-	-	-	0.3
<b>Total designated funds</b>	46.3	-	-	-	(1.8)	44.5
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	88.0	93.1	(82.1)	1.5	-	100.5
Restricted funds	0.2	5.7	(5.8)	-	-	0.1
Endowment funds	0.4	-	-	0.1	-	0.5
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>88.6</u>	<u>98.8</u>	<u>(87.9)</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>101.1</u>

Restricted income comes primarily from legacies but also from other income streams. The restrictions primarily relate to geographical location or the stage of the dog training. Most funds are utilised in the year of receipt as they are matched to activities already happening in the area.

Further detail on specific restricted funds is included on page 51.

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

Transfers between funds include:

### Analysis of revaluation reserve (included within free reserves)

	Group 2014 £m	Group 2013 £m	Charity 2014 £m	Charity 2013 £m
Revaluation of investment portfolio	9.8	16.9	9.8	16.9
Revaluation of properties for use by charity	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9.9	17.0	9.9	17.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

### 12. Commitments

Obligations under operating leases

At the end of the year the annual commitments are as follows:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
<b>For leases of properties expiring:</b>		
Within one year	-	0.2
Between two and five years	0.4	0.2
Over five years	0.2	0.2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	0.6	0.6
	<hr/>	<hr/>

### 13. Legacies

There are some legacies which have been notified to the Association at 31 December 2014 for which the amount receivable cannot be ascertained. These financial statements include payments received on account but not any estimates for future amounts receivable. Indications are that an estimated £31.8 million (2013: £33.3 million) of legacies are potentially receivables in the future.

### 14. Subsidiaries

The Association owns the whole of the issued share capital of: The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Trading Company) Limited, Blind Children UK, NBCS Blind Limited, GDBA Community Care Services Limited, Guide Dogs Limited, Guide Dogs UK Limited and GDBA (Pension Fund Trustees) Limited. Of these only the following trade on their own account:

- Blind Children UK, provides services to blind and partially sighted children, and their families.
- The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Trading Company) Limited is the charity's trading subsidiary.
- Guide Dogs UK Limited operates as a design and new build company for The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. Using a subsidiary reduces the financial risk to the Association. The activities of this subsidiary have ceased at 31 December 2014.

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

A summary of the trading results and net assets for the year ended 31 December 2014 is shown below:

	Blind Children UK 2014 £m	Trading Company 2014 £m	Total 2014 £m	Total 2013 £m
Incoming resources/turnover	1.9	1.3	3.2	2.0
Cost of generating funds/cost of sales	(2.4)	(0.6)	(3.0)	(1.4)
Gross profit	(0.5)	0.7	0.2	0.6
Other operating income	-	0.1	0.1	0.2
Distribution, selling and administration expenses	-	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.5)
Operating (loss)/profit for the financial year	(0.5)	0.2	(0.3)	0.3
Gift Aid donation to charity	-	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.3)
Cost of charitable activities	(3.1)	-	(3.1)	(1.8)
Result for the year	(3.6)	0.0	(3.6)	(1.8)
<b>Reserves at start of year</b>	(1.1)	0.5	(0.6)	1.2
<b>Reserves at end of year</b>	(4.7)	0.5	(4.2)	(0.6)
<b>Current assets</b>	0.2	0.5	1.0	1.4
<b>Current liabilities</b>	(4.9)	(0.3)	(5.2)	(2.0)
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	(4.7)	0.5	(4.2)	(0.6)

The company has taken advantage of the exemptions allowed by the FRS 8, not to disclose transactions with related party undertakings which are wholly owned by the group.

Blind Children UK's income includes a £0.7 million grant from Guide Dogs towards the cost of the Movement Matters service.

Guide Dogs UK Limited's activities were minimal and the other companies were dormant in 2014.

### 15. Pension costs

Other pension costs in Note 5 have been determined under FRS 17 (Retirement Benefits).

Guide Dogs operates two pension schemes:

- The Guide Dogs Personal Pension Plan, a defined contribution scheme which came into existence on 1 April 2011 and is open to all employees. During 2014 employer contributions to this scheme totalled £4,183,000 (2013: £3,915,000). At 31 December 2014 employer's contributions of £395,000 (2012: £338,000) were payable to the scheme.
- The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association Pension Scheme, a defined benefit scheme for all qualifying employees who joined the Association before 1 April 2011, with the assets of the scheme being held in a separately administered fund. This scheme was closed to future accrual on 31 December 2012.

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

Further detail in respect of this scheme is given below.

### a) The amounts recognised in the balance sheet are as follows:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Present value of funded obligations	(258.6)	(233.2)
Fair value of plan assets	247.7	211.0
Deficit	(10.9)	(22.2)

### b) Changes in the present value of the defined benefit obligations are as follows:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Opening defined benefit obligation	233.2	226.7
Interest cost	10.4	10.1
Past service cost	(1.4)	0.4
Actuarial loss	23.2	1.8
Benefits paid	(6.8)	(5.8)
Closing defined benefit obligation	258.6	233.2

### c) Changes in the fair value of the scheme assets are as follows:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Opening fair value of the scheme assets	211.0	195.7
Expected return	13.9	11.9
Actuarial gain	22.9	2.2
Employer contributions	6.7	7.0
Benefits paid	(6.8)	(5.8)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	247.7	211.0

### d) The amounts credited/(charged) within the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Expected return on scheme assets	13.9	11.9
Interest on pension liabilities	(10.4)	(10.1)
Past service cost	1.4	(0.4)
Total amount charged within net outgoing resources	4.9	1.4
Actuarial gains and losses	(0.3)	0.4
Total amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities	4.6	1.8

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

The Association expects to pay contributions to the scheme totalling about £6.7 million in 2015, all of which represents a payment towards the elimination of the deficit.

The most recent full actuarial valuation of the scheme was undertaken as at 31 December 2012.

The cumulative total of recognised actuarial gains and losses is £35.7 million (2012: £35.4 million).

**e) The fair values of the major categories of scheme assets and their long term expected rate of return are as follows:**

	2014 Long-term Expected Return	2014 £m	2013 Long-term Expected Return	2013 £m
Equities	6.40%	71.0	7.60%	77.4
Bonds	2.85%	88.2	4.20%	54.9
Other assets	6.00%	88.5	7.36%	78.7
Total	5.00%	247.7	6.63%	211.0

The overall expected rate of return on the scheme is determined based on yields available on government bonds, corporate bonds, bank base rates and incorporating appropriate risk margins.

	2014 £m	2013 £m
The actual return on the scheme assets in the year	36.8	14.1

**f) Principal assumptions at the balance sheets dates (expressed as weighted averages)**

	2014	2013
Discount rate at 31 December	3.90%	4.60%
Expected return on scheme assets at 31 December	5.00%	6.63%
Rate of increase of pension payments		
Post 2007 pension	3.05%	3.25%
Rate of increase of pensions in deferment	2.20%	2.40%
Proportion of employees opting for early retirement	0.00%	0.00%
Assumes life expectations on retirements age 60:		
Retiring today – males	26.9	26.7
Retiring today – females	29.2	29.2
Retiring in 20 years – males	28.3	28.2
Retiring in 20 year – females	30.7	30.8

**g) History of funding position and experience gains and losses**

	2014 £m	2013 £m	2012 £m	2011 £m	2010 £m
Defined benefit obligation	(258.6)	(233.2)	(226.7)	(218.6)	(192.4)
Scheme assets	247.7	211.0	195.7	172.4	156.8
Deficit	(10.9)	(22.2)	(31.0)	(46.2)	(35.6)
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities	-	0.4	(2.0)	(1.5)	3.9
Experience adjustments on scheme assets	22.9	2.2	5.6	(2.6)	7.0

## Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

### 16. Analysis of net assets between funds

Group	General funds £m	Designated funds £m	Restricted funds £m	Endowment funds £m	Total 2014 £m	Total 2013 £m
Tangible fixed assets	-	44.2	-	-	44.2	46.0
Fixed asset investments	55.7	-	-	0.5	56.2	60.2
Bank balances	3.9	-	-	-	3.9	4.0
Pension fund	(10.9)	-	-	-	(10.9)	(22.2)
Other assets and liabilities	2.4	0.3	0.1	-	2.8	(0.5)
	51.1	44.5	0.1	0.5	96.2	87.5

Charity	General funds £m	Designated funds £m	Restricted funds £m	Endowment funds £m	Total 2014 £m	Total 2013 £m
Tangible fixed assets	-	44.2	-	-	44.2	46.0
Fixed asset investments	56.2	-	-	0.5	56.7	60.7
Bank balances	3.2	-	-	-	3.2	3.0
Pension fund	(10.9)	-	-	-	(10.9)	(22.2)
Other assets and liabilities	7.5	0.3	0.1	-	7.9	1.1
Total Net Assets	56.0	44.5	0.1	0.5	101.1	88.6

### 17. Notes to Cash flow statement

#### Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash outflow from operating activities

	2014 £m	2013 £m
Net expenditure for the financial year	7.1	(10.4)
Investment income	(1.3)	(1.5)
Depreciation	3.6	3.5
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(17.1)	(0.9)
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	0.1	(0.1)
Increase in debtors	(4.8)	(2.1)
Increase in creditors	1.4	0.5
Pension fund non-cash movement	(11.6)	(8.4)
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(22.6)	(19.4)

## Major gifts and donations

Without the commitment of each and every one of our supporters, the work we do at Guide Dogs would simply not be possible. We would like to thank everyone who helped in any way during 2014. In particular our special thanks go to:

Microsoft  
 ITV Text Santa Appeal 2014  
 Specsavers  
 Eukanuba

Restricted Funds include (amongst others) the following grants:

Funder	Grant in respect of	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Unspent at 31 Dec 2014 £
Big Lottery Fund (BLF) Awards for all Scotland	Sensory Tunnel – Scotland	9,990	9,990	-
Big Lottery Fund Awards for all England	Sensory Tunnel - London	9,990	-	9,990
Big Lottery Fund Awards for all England	Lake District Family Weekend	7,591	7,591	-
Peoples Postcode Trust Small Grants	My Guide Scotland	19,000	4,750	14,250
Department of Health – Innovation Excellence and Strategic Development Fund	Children and Young People's Habilitation Service	174,662	174,662	-
Henry Smith charity	Education Support Manager	34,800	34,800	-
		256,033	231,793	24,240





The guide dog service receives no government funding.

We rely on donations from individuals to continue our life-changing work.

## Get in touch

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To apply for a guide dog or enquire  
about another service, or if you  
have sight loss and need help in  
understanding how we might help  
you, please phone **0845 372 7499**

