

Share the Vision Annual Report 2022

Company details:

Company name: Share the Vision (Libraries) Limited

Company information: Charity number: 1136948
Company registration number: 3184753

Registered office: c/o CILIP
7 Ridgmount Street
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Company website: www.readingsight.org.uk

Bankers: Bank of Scotland
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Independent examiner: S J McDonald ICPA
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Report of the Trustees

The trustees, who are also directors of the company, present their report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 2022.

Principal activities

The charity's principal activity during the year was to promote the relief and education of visually impaired and other print disabled people, in particular but not exclusively, by improving the quality and availability of library and information services and products which provide for the reading and information needs of such persons.

Share the Vision personnel

Trustees are appointed as representatives by member organisations.

Those who served as Board Members during the year were as follows:

- James Bartlett (until February 2022)
- Emily Cross
- Alex Britton
- Jackie Chelin
- Mark Freeman (Treasurer)
- Nick Fuller
- Richard Holmes (from February 2022)
- Naomi Kenny
- Mark McCree (Chair)
- Zina Sabovic
- Emma Scott (Company Secretary)
- Jennifer Stewart (until September 2021)

Observers:

- Victoria Dilly (Libraries Connected Project Manager) from September 2021
- Kate Leonard (representing Society of Chief Librarians, Wales)
- Clancy Mason (Arts Council England) from February 2022
- Clare Robe (Arts Council England) until December 2021
- Brid Steele (Libraries NI) from February 2022
- John Vincent (The Network)

Chair's Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2021-2022.

The period covered by this Annual Report is May 2021 to April 2022.

The COVID pandemic has undoubtedly continued to affect proceedings and developments this year. Whilst many hoped that we would emerge sooner from the challenges of coronavirus, the fact is that the pandemic has continued to have a major impact on the organisation and the community it supports.

However, despite the significant challenges, services have demonstrated dedication, flexibility, and resilience to maintain, modify and develop provision to ensure that the needs of customers continued to be met during the most trying of times.

No more was this evident, than when reviewing the shortlisted candidates for the inaugural Libraries Connected: Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise award (Share the Vision undertook the shortlisting exercise in October 2021) – when the adaptability and commitment of libraries was truly evident. Or likewise, when Share the Vision presented at Libraries Connected's virtual seminar on the Promise in June 2021, and attendees shared their experiences.

As in 2020/21, Share the Vision, kept its business and meetings mainly in the realm of the virtual/online; but did manage to retain high levels of attendance and engagement, and make progress with a significant range of activity in alignment with our core aims/action plan.

This was particularly helped by the recruitment of Victoria Dilly (through a partnership with Libraries Connected), into the role of Project Manager. Victoria joined the team in September 2021, initially on a 12-month arrangement, which was then further extended through to March 2023. Victoria has brought additional, dedicated, and skilled capacity to Share the Vision, and this has enabled us to move forward with, for example, our 'Library on a Shelf'/Reading Sight resource pack project.

We have continued to work closely with a wider range of partners, such as Libraries Connected and Ech, to relaunch the Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise, and maintain and develop the Reading Sight website (www.readingsight.org.uk), respectively. Both these resources are now strongly established 'foundations' at the heart of our work.

On a similar note, we are very grateful that David Fay (former Head of Libraries, Arts and Culture for Newcastle City Council) has continued to research and produce our regular, and much-appreciated, Bulletins. These have been sustained throughout the last year and are digitally archived and accessible via Reading Sight and our JISC Reading Sight distribution/discussion list, which is kindly overseen and managed by John Vincent.

Additionally, RNIB and Karen Whittingham, specifically, again helped Share the Vision deliver Hi Vis fortnight, keeping an active handle on all the social media traffic attributed to the annual celebration.

We launched our three-year strategic partnership with The Ulverscroft Foundation in June 2020. However, due to the pandemic, the associated action plan did not begin to be implemented until April 2021. Since then, two update reports have been prepared and delivered to the Trustees charting progress against the agreed targets. This partnership continues to flourish, and has brought greater degree of sustainability, ambition and levels of activity to the organisation.

Finally, as ever, my sincere thanks and appreciation go to all the dedicated Board members and people who have given of their time, expertise, and support to Share the Vision during the past year – Thank you.

Mark McCree
Chair, Share the Vision

Small company special provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part XV of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Background

Share the Vision brings together public and voluntary sector library services and other library organisations to improve access to library services for over two million print disabled people in the UK. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated 11 April 1996 amended by special resolution 27 April 2010. The membership comprises:

- ASCEL (the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians)
- The British Library
- Calibre Audio
- CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals)
- ClearVision
- Libraries Connected
- Libraries NI (Northern Ireland)
- RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)
- Scottish Library and Information Council
- Society of Chief Librarians (Wales)
- Society of College, National and University Libraries

The Arts Council England (ACE) and The Network have Observer status.

Share the Vision pursues its objective by:

- Providing information and advice to public and voluntary sector library services
- Developing and recommending policy and strategies
- Identifying and encouraging best practice
- Supporting collaboration and networking within and between sectors
- Influencing library organisations and other stakeholders

Key achievements 2021-2022

In planning the year's activities, the trustees complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit.

To this end, key activities that were undertaken in 2021/22 included:

- The Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise was highlighted alongside the Universal Offers and Children's Promise via an interactive webinar, hosted by Libraries Connected
- The Learning Pool training resource linked to the Promise was reviewed and updated.
- Share the Vision entered into a strategic partnership with the Ulverscroft Foundation in 2020. Due to the pandemic, the three-year Action Plan was latterly 'launched' in April 2021, following delays relating to the pandemic. The plan provides a focus for the partnership and sets out a range of activities and developments that will be delivered to help achieve a set of shared aims. Two review reports have been produced charting progress, and further exciting developments are due (see Plans for 2022/23 below).
- Hi Vis fortnight (7-20 June 2021) celebrated the diversity of reading. Following an overhaul of branding, and the decision to step away from the 'Make A Noise in Libraries' slogan, the previous year, the refreshed approach has paid dividends and has led to greater profile and levels of engagement.
- Performance reporting and accessibility improvements were made to the Reading Sight website (www.readingsight.org.uk) and new content was added throughout the year.
- Share the Vision has continued to engage, where possible, with other relevant organisations and has responded to enquiries, consultations and requests for support. These have increased in number over the year and have included engagement from DCMS.
- Emma Scott continued to represent Share the Vision on the Reading Friends Steering Group, for the project administered through The Reading Agency; and on LACA, the UK Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance.
- The Chair has played an active role in the Libraries Connected Advisory Committee and played an active role in the review of the Universal Offers/Promises, as noted above.
- We have continued to deliver regular Bulletins, containing relevant information regarding accessible reading, sight loss etc. Whilst the frequency of publication has reduced slightly in the last year (due largely to the availability of content), improvements to design and formatting, as well as the sustained focus on quality, mean this resource remains a highly useful tool for practitioners.

Induction and training of trustees

Trustees are provided with a general introduction and induction to the organisation through the Chair/Secretary, and provided with training, as and where relevant, in the form of courses, presentations, discussions, and visits.

Funds held on behalf of others

STV holds no funds on behalf of others.

Reserves policy

Trustees regularly review the financial situation of the charity and consider it prudent to keep around three or four months' running costs as a reserve to meet any unforeseen expenditure that may occur. Likewise, Trustees are also conscious of not having too much in reserves as the key purpose is to use this finance for the improvement of services and support.

Risks

Risks are regularly reviewed and addressed by the trustees. The main risk is financial sustainability, which is a relatively low risk in the short to medium term, as a result of the new partnership with The Ulverscroft Foundation. However, it is at a higher risk in the longer term, due largely to the falling number of local authorities making a revenue contributions towards Share the Vision, and the likelihood of increased pressures on Council/service budgets.

Plans for 2022/23

The key activities planned for 2022/23 include:

- Deliver on the actions set out in the Share the Vision/Ulverscroft Foundation action plan: including, in particular, the design, production and dissemination of the Reading Sight resource pack (incorporating marketing and promotional materials for both Reading Sight, the Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise, and Reading Friends).
- In partnership with Libraries Connected, aim to recruit a new Project Manager.
- Focus on making public library services accessible and useable; with particular attention being given to the provision of accessible reading formats and information.
- Champion the development of accessible and relevant digital reading services, content, and activities.
- Encourage local library services to sign-up to the Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise (VPIPP)/Share the Vision 'Champions'.
- Develop further training and development opportunities around VPIPP and support for customers with sight loss.

- Raise greater awareness of the various online information resources available to practitioners and customers (i.e. Reading Sight, Reading Friends, Sight line and Learning Pool).
- Highlight and encourage good practice in public libraries at national, regional, and local level through engagement with partners and organisations; in particular, via Hi VIS fortnight and national webinars.
- Work with ASCEL and SCONUL to improve understanding and address issues around accessible reading faced by people in education.
- Work with DCMS and sector organisations to influence central and local government, plus other key stakeholders.
- Ensure that the organisation continues to operate in an effective and sustainable way.

Signed *MAM Cree*

Date: 8th September 2022