



SightSupport
Hull & East Yorkshire

Annual Report 2022-2023



**Helping blind and partially sighted people of all ages
to enjoy active and fulfilled lives**

About Us

Who We Are

We are a UK registered charity with more than 150 years experience of providing support for people with sight loss in Hull and the East Riding.

OUR VISION

We believe no one in Hull and East Yorkshire should have to face sight loss alone and every visually impaired person can enjoy the same opportunities and quality of life as those who are fully sighted.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to improve and enrich the quality of life for local people at any stage of sight loss, through the provision of a wide range of support services, enabling them to reach their full potential and lead independent lives.

OFFICIALS

TRUSTEES

Chairman Debbie Rosenberg
Enid Adams
Ann Gray
Hollie Haeney
Eric Harrod
James Houston
David Longman
Ann Massam
Michael O'Grady
Malcolm Revell
Robin Russell
Carol Winter

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Sandra Ackroyd

PRESIDENT

HM Lord-Lieutenant of the
East Riding of Yorkshire
Mr James Dick OBE

VICE PRESIDENT

Valerie Wood

SOLICITORS

Gosschalks

AUDITORS

Streets Chartered Accountants

INVESTMENT ADVISORS

Investec Wealth & Investment Ltd



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



Chairman's Introduction

The mission of Sight Support Hull and East Yorkshire (HEY) is to improve and enrich the quality of life for local people at all stages of sight loss, through the provision of a wide range of support services, enabling them to reach their full potential and lead independent lives; we continue to be committed to this mission.

The period this annual review covers, April 2022 to March 2023, has been a year of continued recovery for the Charity and returning to normality after COVID 19. It has been wonderful to see people regain confidence and return to our day groups and social activities. These activities benefit our service users enormously. We have continued to provide focus days for our service users where we promote a wide range of equipment available from our Resource Centre.

This continues to be another financially difficult year, with both the cost of living crisis and the challenging economic climate affecting the Charity's finances. The economic situation is having a direct impact on our opportunities for income generation.

We are delighted to continue to work with the National Lottery Community Fund and are very grateful for their commitment to fund our SocialEYES activities for a further three years.

We are very grateful to the Ideas Fund, who have provided financial support to enable us to offer valuable new services for children and families which we are thrilled to do. These new services have

been provided in partnership with Hull University.

Our Board of Trustees have been working hard to ensure the Charity follows all of governance recommendations and to ensure we continue to remain financially stable and we remain committed to ensure continued support for our service users in the future.

I extend sincere thanks on behalf of all Trustees to all our volunteers and staff team, ably led by Chief Executive Sandra Ackroyd, who all continue to work hard to deliver excellent services to our service users.

Debbie Rosenberg
CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Chief Executive's Welcome

Welcome to our annual review of 2022/2023; this is our opportunity to reflect on our successes and challenges over the last twelve months. We're delighted that during this year we could move forward from the challenges of the last couple of years and could return to 'services as normal' and enjoy all being together. It's been wonderful to have everyone back in our centre during this year and to hear the 'buzz' of activity again.

We all know how much we like a party here at Sight Support and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 gave us the great excuse, with good food, music and entertainment - a great time was had by all.

We continue to work with our good friends FitMums and Friends who provide a range of walks, runs and exercise classes specially adapted for those with visual impairments.

We also extend our sincere thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund who have agreed to fund our Revitalise with SocialEYES programme for a further three years – we really couldn't provide these services without this financial support.

We are also very excited to be supported by the Ideas Fund this year, which is allowing us to offer a new range of children and family services which have been very well received and having a really positive impact on some of the young people, as you will read later in this review. Our art group in partnership with Artlink has continued to go from strength to strength and we've seen wonderful pieces of artwork being created by the members.

Our primary aim never differs – to support people with visual

At a Glance

2,444 people with sight loss supported

300 new people with sight loss referred to us for support

69 volunteers

22 members of staff

23 tenants supported

impairments in the best way possible and we have continued to do this throughout this year in a variety of ways. Our services offer opportunities to connect with others, learn new activities, get active and enjoy the outdoors and really help people with visual impairments to maintain positive physical and mental health and it's great to see some of this demonstrated in the case studies in this review.

Fundraising continues to be challenging in the difficult economic climate but we continue to offer a variety of ways in which individuals and groups can help us fundraise and I am pleased to say the charity remains financially stable and committed to delivering a full range of services for visually impaired people in our region.

As always, I would like to thank the fantastic staff and volunteer team for all their hard work and dedication throughout the year; we really are lucky to have you all.

Sandra Ackroyd
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Advice and Support

Home Visiting

We know that without support sight loss can have a devastating impact on individuals and their loved ones.

Our Community Advice Officers (CAO's) offer individualised support and advice, whether the individual is newly diagnosed or an existing service user who requires assistance.

They can provide emotional and practical support to help people to live a more independent lifestyle including:

assistance and advice on welfare and disability benefit applications, information and advice on low vision equipment and magnification assessments to identify the best lighting and tools for the home environment. There is no charge for this service.

At a Glance

2,028 people visited in their own homes to receive advice and support

64 the number of benefit applications submitted by service user with assistance from our team

£413,159 the additional income raised in benefits



Our Community Advice Officer has set up a monthly coffee morning in Pocklington to be held every two months. The first one took place in February and was attended by 11 people from the surrounding area. The group had lots of ideas about the kind of information they would like and there are plans for our Resource Coordinator to attend future meetings with a selection of equipment from the Resource Centre to demonstrate.

"I would like to thank you so much for sending Karen Andrews to visit me. Never having had help before, I was a little nervous and a bit embarrassed to meet her. Those thoughts disappeared when she came into my home. Karen was friendly and caring, but still professional. I always try to find a way to make things easier, but now I will be getting attendance allowance it will help me so much. I cannot put into words how grateful I am. Thank you so much."

RL



Advice and Support

Resource Centre

Our Resource Centre offers information, advice and demonstrations of a wide range of equipment such as daily living aids which customers can try before they buy and we can assist with ordering equipment on behalf of customers.



At a Glance

252 visitors given help and advice

£9,992 worth of equipment ordered on behalf of service users

4 equipment exhibitions and focus days held attended by

129 service users

In addition, we hold a number of equipment focus days and a Low Vision Exhibition working with dozens of specialist suppliers and other sight loss charities such as Guide Dogs and the Macular Society.

Resource Centre Opening Hours

Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm

Please book an appointment in advance to avoid unnecessary delays or waiting times. Call 01482 342297 or email info@sightsupport.org.

Supported Housing

Sight Support HEY manages Beech Holme Court; a housing complex of 23 homes primarily for active, visually impaired people of all ages who are independent and care for themselves.



At a Glance

23 flats

23 tenants living independently with support

Tenants can enjoy a secure building, with controlled entry and CCTV and a 24 hour remote support service as well as spacious gardens.

Social events are occasionally organised purely for Beech Holme Court tenants and their guests and all tenants can enjoy access to the regular groups and activities on offer at Sight Support. A freshly cooked, healthy and affordable meal can also be purchased on site.

Advice and Support

Training and Technology

Sight loss can make it more difficult to benefit from the opportunities that new technology offers. However, the right adapted technology, hands on experience, training and support can make what seems 'the impossible', possible.

From using a smart phone to a tablet, magnification software to screen readers, we can demonstrate how these can be of benefit to someone. Tuition can be received online as part of a group or one-on-one in the comfort of a person's own home.

"I would like to thank Tracy who spent time with me running through some technical assistance. I have put everything into practise and it is now working wonderfully"

GJ

Telephone Befriending

Sight Support HEY recognises and understands how the onset of sight loss or deterioration of remaining vision can lead to increasing isolation, as individuals lack the confidence or ability to leave their own homes unaided. Our telephone befriending service offers support to those people who find themselves in this situation.

A friendly chat on the phone can make all the difference. Our Telephone Befriending service allows trained volunteers to make regular calls to people. Care is taken to match the interests of the members and volunteers to make the relationship as productive and interesting as possible. The service offers important contact and companionship for both the volunteer and the member and helps reduce social isolation and feelings of loneliness .

At a Glance

112 telephone calls offering IT support blind and partially sighted people

10 Talking Tech sessions held online with

71 total attendees

104 one-on-one technology tuition sessions undertaken



At a Glance

25 volunteers, calling

107 people regularly offering an understanding chat totalling

2,572 hours of talk time!

Leisure and Social Opportunities

Day Groups

Sight loss can often mean isolation and spending long hours alone at home, but it doesn't have to. Our Day Groups can usually get people out and about, making new friends and new memories.

The start of the year saw the merger of our Tuesday and Wednesday Day groups into one Tuesday Group. The merger has proved a big success with all the service users enjoying the new busier group.

In June we held four parties to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth. As always, everyone had a lovely time with music, good food and lots of dancing.



At a Glance

288 Day Groups held

3,297 Day Group visits

5 Christmas Parties held

4 Jubilee Parties held

"When I was diagnosed I felt like giving up and thought it was the end; I didn't know how I would be able to cope so you could say that Sight Support saved me and they have never stopped being there for me. They help me with all sorts, things I don't know how to do myself and you also learn from other people who give you ideas on how to help yourself".

VT

Scarborough Holiday

Following two years of being unable to attend due to the pandemic, we finally managed to get away on our annual Scarborough holiday in June. Twenty two service users attended the holiday and everyone had a lovely time. We had lots of new people attending and interest is already high for next year's holiday.



Leisure and Social Opportunities

SocialEYES

As part of our SocialEYES programme, Sight Support HEY offers an increasingly diverse range of opportunities to help blind and partially sighted people reduce their isolation and enjoy their leisure time. Activities include singing, arts and crafts, fitness workouts, ten pin bowling and much more.

At a Glance

39 members active on a weekly basis

96 arts and crafts boxes delivered

24 tennis sessions organised

24 outdoor exercise sessions organised

Once again Sight Support HEY entered a team into the local Disability Games in April. Everyone had a great day and we came away with four trophies and lots of happy service users. Our thanks to the local Rotary Clubs for organising this amazing event.

In June we introduced a new weekly session on a Wednesday based at Sight Support called the Social Zone. This drop in session, offers café style refreshments along with a range of activities eg, bocchia, kurling or people can just meet up and have a chat.

Our regular outings are as popular as ever and this year have included trips to Beverley Races, Hornsea Inshore Rescue, Hull Seahawks Ice Hockey game and Humberside Fire and Rescue.

Due to the unavailability of Costello stadium during the early part of July, our Fitness Walking group headed out to Mr Moos Ice Cream Parlour followed by a walk through the woodland and down to the beach. Everyone really enjoyed the walk and said it was nice to do something different. The group also enjoyed walks in Pearson and Peter Pan Park.



Leah's Story:

From isolation to connection

When Leah first came to us, she was struggling with socialising, anxiety, and the feelings of isolation. She had been through a difficult time and was finding it challenging to connect with society again. However, when she heard about Sight Support, she decided to give it a try.



At first, Leah was hesitant and unsure about opening up to strangers, but she quickly discovered that the other members of the group were incredibly supportive and welcoming. They shared their own stories and struggles, and she realized that she was not alone in her journey.

In a short period, Leah became more comfortable and confident in the group as she developed new skills and coping strategies that helped her manage her mental health challenges more effectively. Most importantly, she found a sense of community and belonging that she had been missing for a long time as she formed deep connections with the other members of the group describing her new friendships as “a source of comfort and strength”.

“Her confidence has grown so much and she took the bus for the first-time in 3 years” Leah’s carer, Sean, said. “She’s become more lively and outgoing and I attribute a lot of that to the support she’s getting at Sight Support” He added.

Leah is one of our newest service users and we’re delighted to have been a part of her journey and witnessed her incredible transformation. It is a testament to the power of community and the importance of seeking support when you need it.



Leisure and Social Opportunities

Children & Families

In 2023 Sight Support HEY was one of seven community projects across Hull to have been awarded a total of £267,000 in grants from The Ideas Fund to work with researchers to develop and try out ideas that address problems related to mental wellbeing in their communities.

Sight Support HEY is using its £53,693 grant to develop a project, in partnership with a researcher from the University of Hull, to improve the mental wellbeing of local children affected by sight loss by enabling them to express their personal stories and experiences through creative activities, including arts, drama, music and nature based activities.

The project, which runs until March 2024, is in its very early stages having only launched in February 2023 however feedback from the first few activity sessions has been extremely positive.

“Gracie had a great time she really loved the music and the different songs that they played, she loves to sing even if the words are not the same she likes to give it a go.”
Gracie’s mum

At a Glance

93 visually impaired children and their families supported

4 activity sessions delivered



**the
ideas
fund**



**BRITISH
SCIENCE
ASSOCIATION**



Tianna's Story

Tianna's visual impairment limited her ability to participate in many social activities. As a result, she often felt isolated and lacked the confidence to interact with her peers. So her parents decided to bring her to attend some of the new children's activities at Sight Support.

At first, Tianna was hesitant to participate, as she was very shy, however, she soon began to connect with other children and expressed herself through the various activities like arts and sports, which provided her with a sense of belonging and community.

"As the weeks have gone on she's become more confident. It's allowed her to find that she can do things the same as other people and she's learned it's okay to do that.

Sometimes as a parent you can hold them back. And this has taught me that I don't need to hold her back. It enables her to go out and be more confident and do things by herself instead of needing me to do it all the time".

Tianna's mum



"Tianna lacked confidence, but after attending the activities at Sight Support, she learnt to do things differently and understood that it was okay to be different."

Tianna's Mum

Tianna said that she loves going to the Art session on a Monday with Sight Support and always tells me everything she has been doing there! She also loves going to the Sight Support Multi-sports session, preferring the Tennis sessions. She speaks about the friends she has made and the younger children she helps.

School and I have noticed that, because she is attending outside activities with Sight Support, her confidence has grown enormously. Tianna is now asking for help when she needs it and is confidently moving around the classroom, interacting with a range of different adults. During our 1:1 sessions, Tianna will speak with more confidence about her vision and raise specific issues which she needs help with to improve her learning conditions during the school day.

I am so pleased that she has been attending the wonderful sessions run by the Sight Support team as she has really benefitted from doing so.

Rachel Hudson

QTVI

Sensory and Physical Teaching Service

Volunteering

Our Volunteers don't get paid.... not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless!

Volunteering is at the heart of Sight Support HEY and without the incredible support given by our 68 regular volunteers giving 3665 hours of their time over the last year much of our work would simply not be possible. If we were to pay the minimum wage for this contribution the cost would be £38,194.

Sight Support HEY has many volunteering opportunities, from assisting in our Day Groups, gardening, administration, helping at fund raising events such as store collections, luncheons and craft fayres.... there's something for everyone!

Our volunteers can gain a benefit by undertaking training in such as Health and Safety, food hygiene, first aid, as well as visual impairment awareness training and sighted guiding.

We are always looking to recruit new volunteers. If you would like to discuss ways in which you can get involved with us, simply call our Volunteer Coordinator on 01482 342297 or email volunteering@sightsupport.org.



Fundraising

In 2022/23 we were once again able to resume many of our usual fundraising activities, however the effectiveness of the Fundraising department was severely hampered by the ill health of the IGMM whose working hours were significantly reduce for a large part of the year. As a result a number of key events were cancelled and our overall community fundraising was limited during this period.

As we receive no ongoing government funding, we rely on donations and gifts in wills to continue our work. We are therefore incredibly grateful to all our supporters who helped us in 2022/23. Here are just a few of the ways you supported us this year.

We would like to say a big thank you to Carol Winter and Ann Massam pictured below for arranging and hosting a Ladies Lunch at the Blue Bell Pub in Cottingham and raising a fantastic £1,158.



A huge thank you to everyone who completed the Little Weighton Walk. Special thanks also to Carol Winter (pictured below left) for once again organising this annual event and all her volunteers for their help in making the day possible. The event raised a fabulous £235.



Good friend of the charity Tom Skinner (pictured left) took on his most physical and mental challenge to date by taking the Hardmoors 40. A ultra marathon from Beverley to Malton along the Wolds Way. Covering an overall distance of around 47 miles with over 4500 feet of elevation. His incredible efforts raised over £600!



Sight Support HEY is registered with the Fundraising Regulator to demonstrate our commitment to legal, open, honest, and respectful fundraising.

Fundraising

Trusts and Charitable Foundations

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable support we have received from the following Charitable Trusts and Foundations over the past financial year:

Joseph and Annie Cattle Trust
Sir James Reckitt Centenary Fund
Ideas Fund
National Lottery Community Fund
Rank Foundation
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
Joseph Rank Benevolent Fund
Sport England Together Fund

Gifts in Kind

Whether it's soft toys and unwanted gifts for tombolas, prizes for raffles or free storage space for our equipment such as the space provided by Armadillo Storage, Hull, your donations of goods can be just as important as cash. Such gifts not only help us to raise money, but to save money too. To find out how you, or your company, can support us through Gifts in Kind, please contact us on 01482 342297 or email fundraising@sightsupport.org.

Legacies

Leaving a legacy to Sight Support HEY enables us to continue our work supporting thousands of local people with sight loss. More than a quarter of our work is funded from the income generated by gifts in wills.

Remembering us in your Will allows us to continue our activities and helps us to develop new ones. Every penny donated will remain in our area, and will go towards ensuring a brighter future for blind and partially sighted people.

We also offer a free online will writing service and assistance with accessing this service for those who need it.

If you would like any further information on writing your Will, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01482 342297.

85p in every pound we raise goes directly to help blind or partially sighted people in Hull and East Yorkshire



Thank you

We'd like to thank each and every one of our supporters. You make the difference in the lives of thousands of people with sight loss.

With your continued support we'd like to achieve even more in the future. Please contact us to get involved or **text SSHEY to 70085 to donate £5**.

For the price of a cup of coffee and a piece of cake, you can make a real difference in the life of a local child or adult with sight loss.

Thank you.

The Difference Your Support Makes

"If it wasn't for Sight Support arranging days like this, I would not have been able to find out about and get a hands on experience with fantastic pieces of low vision equipment. The Mercury Viewpoint that I tried (showcased by Seeing Solutions), allowed me to see things that I never thought I could, which will help me carry on doing on my hobby which is repairing motorbikes."

PG



"The impact of these activities and the support I have received has been immeasurable. My physical health has improved a good deal over the past two years and I look forward to every session. I have always loved sport and now feel less resentful of my sight loss given that it is not preventing me from continuing with some of my favourite activities. I also feel that I achieve a better work-life balance currently".

BJ

"I can't fault Sight Support; they gave me my life back. I came in and felt 'normal' and everyone was so friendly."

VM



"I was nervous for the first bit but I'm not nervous now, I loved the fast bits and the music".

Child M

Sammy's Story:

Sight Support continues to transform the lives of individuals living with visual impairments.

Sammy, one of the service users, shares the story of how she discovered renewed hope and resilience since she started attending activities at Sight Support.

Sammy's visual impairment, not only affected her physical abilities but also took a toll on her mental health. Dealing with the isolation and depression, Sammy needed help and reached out to Sight Support.

By joining the different activities as part of our SocialEYES leisure and activity programme, Sammy started to engage in social interactions, develop new skills, and find a sense of belonging in a supportive community.

In a year, Sammy's confidence was transformed. The sense of empowerment she gained from overcoming challenges, connecting with like-minded individuals, and expressing herself creatively led to a remarkable improvement in her mental well-being.

Sammy's journey is a testament to how having a support community is vital in empowering individuals living with visual impairment. By providing a supportive environment and interactive activities, individuals can overcome isolation, build resilience, and embrace a life filled with joy and meaning.



Finances

Financial review

Our income for the year has decreased overall by 16% from £537,185 to £452,351. This can almost entirely be attributed to a fall in legacy income to £43,709 from £128,424 in the prior year which fluctuate dependant on them being kindly received. All other income streams are relatively consistent with the prior year, but our income continues to be affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the economic issues.

We have been able to increase some of our charitable activities resulting in an increase in income, however, although there is a small increase in fundraising income, this is still almost 50% lower than the fundraising income prior to the pandemic. It is anticipated that the charity will continue to increase the regular services and fundraising activities and the income should improve in the next financial year.

Beech Holme Court income decreased by 3% from £171,887 to £166,418, and the expenditure increased by 3% from £167,670 to £173,884. There was a net deficit on this service of £7,466 (2022 - £4,217(surplus)).

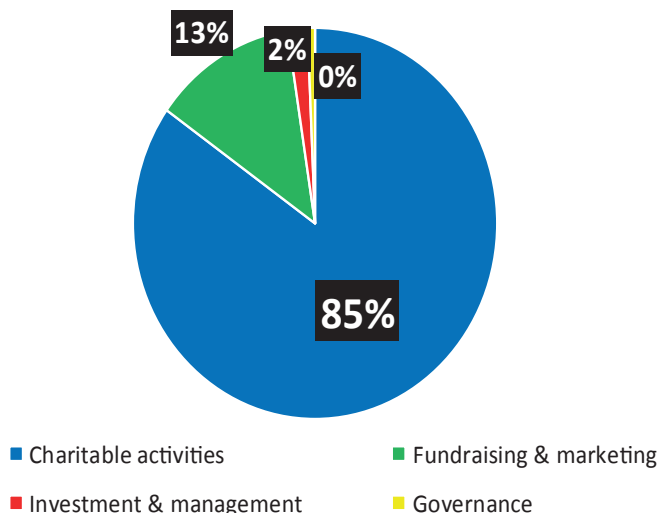
Expenditure in the year increased slightly compared to the previous year.

During the year the markets have continued to be affected by the conflict, inflation, labour shortages and the cyclical uncertainty and the portfolio has decreased in value by £193,986, however, the investment income increased in the year by £3,090, from £61,177 to £64,267. This decrease in the portfolio value has increased the deficit in the year of £234,501 (2022 - £129,185) to a deficit of £428,487 (2022 - £15,649).

Although this has been another very difficult year, the Charity remains financially sustainable due to good financial management and sufficient reserves, which will be used as necessary during this period to cater for the loss of income.

Where your donation goes

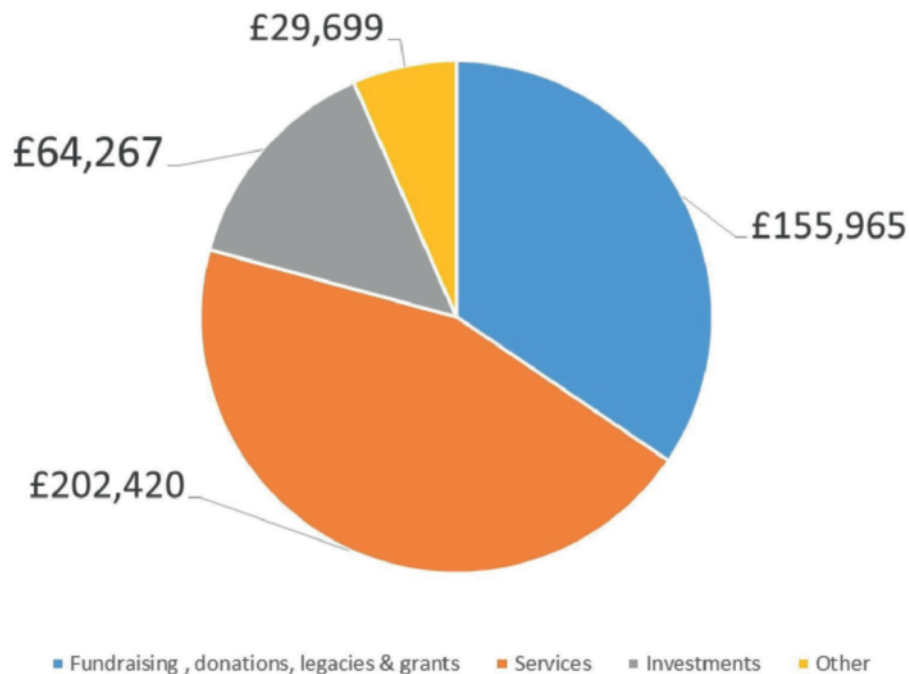
85p from every £1 donation we receive is spent on providing support services to local people with sight loss.



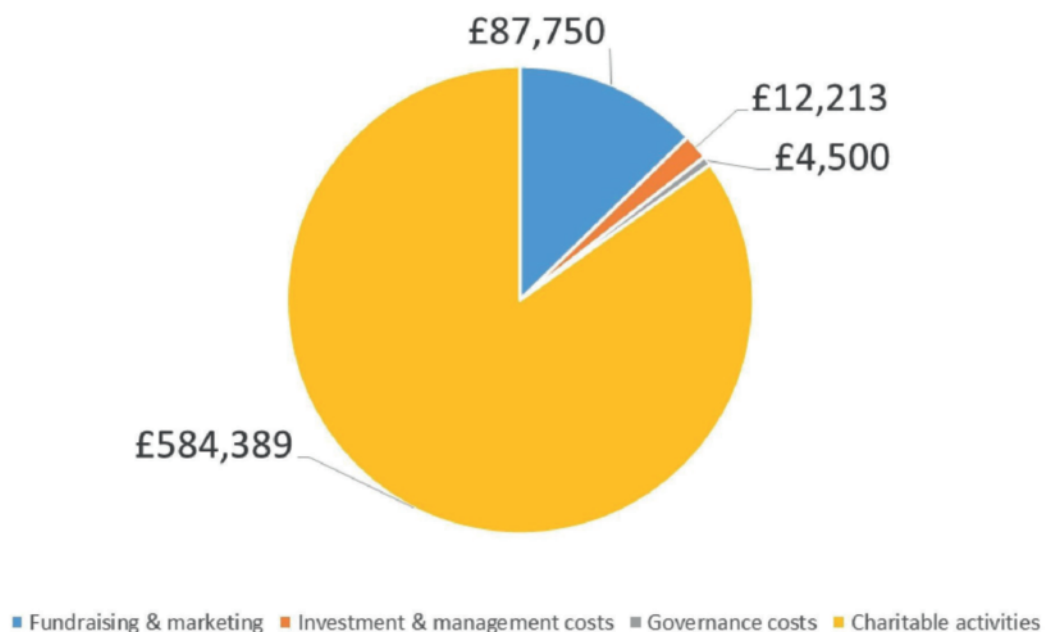
Our Finances at a Glance

During 2022/23 23 received £452,351 in total income and spent £686,852.

Where our funding comes from



What we spend



Every penny raised or donated is spent in Hull and East Yorkshire

This financial summary was taken from audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023. For a copy of the trustees' report and full accounts please contact us at info@sightsupport.org or 01482 342297.



SightSupport
Hull & East Yorkshire

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This report is also available in CD, large print and Braille.

PDF- Acceptance

