

# 2020

## ANNUAL REPORT

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**ANGEL EYES NI**

*Angel  
Eyes*  
N.I.

# CHAIR'S REPORT

I am relatively new to Angel Eyes and, as a trustee, inevitably somewhat removed from the charity's day-to-day work. But my limited experience to date has brought home to me the tremendous work being done by our outstanding team, led by Sara McCracken.

Angel Eyes NI continues to reach out to and support families whose children are visually impaired. Our aim is that no family should feel alone in dealing with a diagnosis or in supporting a child with sight loss. More importantly, no visually impaired child should be impeded from fully achieving their aspirations. The charity brings to bear on these important goals a range of specialist skills and experience. Our staff have particular expertise in psychological counselling for families and children, in the latest techniques and technologies to support visual impairment, in understanding the complex regulations around access to specialist educational and health services, and also, very importantly, in how best to ensure children have fun and fulfilment in their social lives.

We are a small charity and receive no government funding. So, we are totally dependent on, and most grateful for, the generous support of the public, private companies, trusts, and foundations. In particular, we are extremely thankful for the financial and voluntary support of the families we work with. Towards the end of the 2019-20 year - and since - the already difficult fundraising environment worsened dramatically as Covid-19 halted all our usual fundraising events.

So, I must congratulate the team, and in particular CEO Sara McCracken, for so ably sustaining our finances during this extremely difficult period.

2020

## CHAIR'S REPORT CONT'D

As you will see from the list of trustees, there has been considerable change at board level. I am delighted, and grateful, to work with such a helpful and supportive group and I believe that, together, we are making substantial progress in strengthening our organisation. We have overhauled governance and operational policies and procedures, improved our financial reporting system, and are now in the process of reviewing our longer-term strategy. Importantly, too, we are increasing our communications capacities in order to lift our profile and voice to speak out more strongly for the needs and interests of NI's visually impaired community. During the year we established a subsidiary company to develop and exploit our unique virtual reality technology. This is not only a great opportunity to improve our services to visually impaired children, but also a chance to generate profile and profits for the charity's work.

Angel Eyes has, I believe, considerable other opportunities to enlarge its capacities and expertise in the years to come.

In conclusion, I want again to thank my fellow trustees, our small dedicated team, and especially all our families, volunteers, partner organisations, and supporters. It is only together that we are able to do so much.



**Dr Brian Scott**  
Chair



2020

# Chief Executives Report

## April 2019 - March 2020

As I write this report on the last amazing year for Angel Eyes NI it's hard to believe how different the world is now, working and delivering services remotely, while living through a global pandemic we have never seen in our lifetime. This has been a learning curve for all of us and I am so proud of the wonderful team who have stepped up to this challenge to meet the needs of our families.

Our year was full of successes including the development of our prototype Virtual Reality Software which can be manipulated to let parents "see through the eyes of their child". We have demonstrated this to parents and professionals to help them understand the impact of childhood visual impairment and are working hard to refine this and deliver to more families and professionals supporting our children.

This year we partnered with Ulster University to develop an accredited Level 4 Classroom Assistant Qualification "Supporting Pupils with a Visual Impairment" and saw the first cohort successfully complete the 10-week online learning course. Listening to our families, we added to the clubs we deliver for our children and young people, by including Mini Music and a Teens Hub, working collaboratively with Guide Dogs NI, RNIBNI, Sense NI, Open Arts and others to ensure they are exciting, engaging and meaningful with the wonderful support of 70 volunteers.

Our Visual Processing conference in Stormont, sponsored by Trevor Lunn from Alliance Party, welcomed expert Prof John Ravenscroft from University of Edinburgh, Janet Harwood, a Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired from Bristol, and Professor Kathryn Saunders from Ulster University. The hugely successful event was fully booked by parents and professionals.

I value our board members to help achieve our vision, and this year I was so pleased to welcome new board members Brian Scott, Tony Barclay, Michael Johnston, Joanne Lyneham, Michelle Bateson and Wilson Matthews who bring a wealth of experience including charity management, law, finance and lived experience of bringing up a child with a visual impairment. Sadly, Elaine Orwin stepped down as Chair, having served for three years in which she was dedicated and passionate to help and support the charity through a time of change and growth.

# Chief Executives Report

## April 2019 - March 2020 cont'd.



After many years of service on the board Rachel Hogan and Frances Hill retired from the board. Cara Taylor, Rachel Ketola, Paul Gillen and Anthony Newman also stepped down. I would like to say thank you to them all for their hard work and commitment through their time with us and wish them well in their future endeavours. I am so pleased that Brian Scott was nominated as Chair earlier in the year. He has an impressive CV including extensive experience of the charity sector, having been CEO of Oxfam Ireland for 10 years and Chair of the Halifax Foundation. We are currently reviewing our strategy and intend to change certain things especially in the light of the dramatically changed circumstances caused by the virus and are excited to launch this later in the year.

Thank you to all our supporters, families, and staff who supported and organised fundraising events which have enabled us to provide and grow our services. We were honoured that the annual Blind Running Event was held this year, with all proceeds going to AENI. We are especially honoured that Tony Barclay, founder, and organiser of the event, also joined the board of Angel Eyes NI.

Thank you to all our funders including National Lottery, Halifax Foundation, Hospital Saturday Fund, ARN Foundation, Paul Newman Foundation, St James Place and Children in Need for awarding grants that have made all our achievements possible.

We have achieved so much in 2019/20 and we could not have done it without you, our supporters. Without your drive, passion and generous support, we simply couldn't have done any of what you're about to read in the following pages – so thank you, and of course our families, children and young people who inspire and motivate us to keep doing it!

**Sara McCracken**  
**Chief Executive**  
**June 2020**

# Our Vision

To improve outcomes for children who are blind and partially sighted in Northern Ireland. Education

This year we supported 142 parents and carers through our Education Advocacy service, with knowledge, understanding and confidence in education; enabling them to navigate the education system and helping improve outcomes for their children. This continues to be our most sought-after service, with families reporting this as their major concern for their children. The Education Advocacy service is delivered through the Family Insight Project, funded by National Lottery and in partnership with RNIBNI. This vital service offers one to one support for families and helps to facilitate positive communication and dialogue with school, other outside agencies, and Education Authority.

In April 2019, we hosted an Inclusive Technology Workshop for parents and children to increase knowledge and confidence in using assistive technology to support learning. In August 2019, we hosted an Assistive Technology Exhibition in collaboration with Sight & Sound Ltd, giving families and professionals an opportunity to try out all the latest technology with the resident experts advising them.

Finally, in partnership with RNIB, we facilitated 2 Back to School workshops for families, giving them an opportunity to have all their questions answered, regarding supporting learning at home and signposting, referring and demystifying other services that are or could be accessed.

## Classroom Assistant Training

We were delighted to see our first cohort of students complete our 'Supporting Pupils with Vision Impairment in Education' Level 4 Accredited Qualification with Ulster University. This course was developed with Ulster University, to meet the gaps in training and knowledge of Classroom assistants identified by our service and The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) report in June 2017, which cited the need for specialist training in schools to effectively support pupils with Special Educational Needs. The 10-week course comprises of 5 online lectures and two workshops. Peer support is facilitated, and assessment is both formative and summative. The first cohort of 20 students engaged in October 2019, completing in December with a 100% success rate. 100% of participants reported increased knowledge of eye conditions and 95% reported increased knowledge, understanding and confidence in supporting a pupil with vision impairment to access the curriculum. Funding has been secured for the next roll-out of the course which will take place in January 2021.

# Clubs and Volunteers

We continued into year 6 of our Saturday Club at Jordanstown School funded by Awards for All. This whole family club provides accessible sessions including sport, art, life skills and emotional wellbeing for our children and young people with parents enjoying education, mindfulness, and information sessions. This year we had 48 families engage with the club.

Year 2 for our Games at Rainey Endowed School in Magherafelt, comprised of sporting activities for the children and an opportunity for parents to meet and share ideas and experiences. This club is run by Charlie who is not only a Physical Education teacher at Rainey, but a father of a child with a visual impairment, making this a fun interactive session for all the children who attended. We were pleased to receive funding to continue to run our InTune workshops for our children with visual impairment and additional needs. This monthly club is always fully booked and has a high adult to child ratio support.

In February 2020 we commenced 3 new Mini Music clubs in Newry, Belfast, and Newtownards. Mini Music is a music and movement session, delivered by Open Arts, centred around bonding and communication between parents and their visually impaired infant aged 0-4.

We also started our Teen Hub, a social group for our young people of Secondary school age and over, with a focus on the Arts. This exciting new group will no doubt go from strength to strength in 2020/21.

Volunteers continue to deliver a key role and are so important to the smooth running of our clubs. This year we drew on our existing strong links and recruited new volunteers from Belfast High School and Rainey Endowed School. New links were also made with Teacher Training University, St. Mary's University College Belfast which has increased our volunteers for the InTune Workshops. We updated and refreshed our training, making it even more comprehensive and rewarding for those participating, with a newly developed Professional Training Pack for organisations that deliver sessions at our clubs.

## **Early Years Support**

Through our partnership project Family Focus with Guide Dogs NI and Sense NI, we deliver 5 monthly Time to Play Groups which offer Early Years Habilitation and Parent Support. These groups are in Belfast, Ballynahinch, Banbridge, Jordanstown and Broughshane and are funded by National Lottery. To complement these groups, we also run 3 Coffee and Chat sessions, in Newtownards, Banbridge and Dungannon for families and parents to enjoy some time to meet, share and get ideas and support from our experienced Early Years Family Support Co-Ordinator with informal sessions on communication and play.

## **OHANA Residential October 2019**

We were delighted to host a 3-night activity residential for our families and 1 activity day for 5 additional families over Halloween Mid-Term break October 2019, funded by Hospital Saturday Fund.

The project was named OHANA, as this means family in Hawaiian and the acronym stands for Overcoming Hurdles and Never be Afraid.

The aim for the project was for families to experience challenges and new activities together where they could support each other through actions and words of encouragement. 6 families with shared experiences took part in the residential, developing new skills, building resilience and confidence. The activities included Archery, Abseiling, Craft and Team Building where families could have a go in a safe environment.

What our participants said:

"Excellent few days, didn't know what to expect, exceeded all expectations"

"No improvements needed. It was super. Our girls were so proud of themselves for everything they did during the activities"

## **Peter Pan Panto at the Lyric Theatre 2019**

We hosted our annual Christmas Panto outing at Lyric Theatre Belfast in December 2019. It was a full house at Peter Pan, with touch tour and audio description for 122 children and families who attended. A big thank you to the Lyric staff who are always so welcoming and accommodating and for the donation from Specsavers to be able to organise this annual event for our families

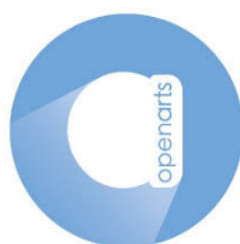


# In Summary

From April 2019 through to March 2020 Angel Eyes NI:

- Supported 142 Families and Carers through the Education Advocacy Service
- Hosted an Inclusive Technology Workshop for parents and families
- Facilitated 2 Back to School Workshops in conjunction with RNIB
- 20 Classroom Assistants completed the first Training Course –
- 'Supporting Pupils with Vision Impairment in Education' Level 4 Accredited Qualification with 100% Success rate.
- We engaged with 48 families at the Saturday Club at Jordanstown
- We continued our Games at Rainey Club providing physical activities
- We continued our In-Tune Workshops
- We started 3 new Mini Music Clubs
- We Started a new Teen Hub Club
- We delivered 5 monthly Time to Play Group sessions
- We delivered 3 Coffee and Chat sessions
- We successfully delivered a 3-night residential for families
- We continued our partnership with Specsavers hosting the Annual Panto for families.

## Thank you to our funders and partners



# Strategic Report

for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

## Financial review

Incomes in the year was £173,632 and expenditure totalled £140,830 giving a surplus of £32,802. Unrestricted reserves stood at £12,410 at the close of the period.

### Policy on reserves

Angel Eyes NI Services maintains a prudent level of reserves to enable the organisation to manage financial risk and deliver on our commitments. The objective is that the organisation would be able to carry on its work, even if faced with a combination of difficult circumstances, and have the time to adjust its strategy to meet these changing circumstances. Our reserves policy is set therefore to ensure that there is not disruption to our services at short notice, due to a lack of funds, an unforeseen reduction in income or an increase in expenditure, while at the same time ensuring that reserves are no higher than necessary and not retained longer than required. This gives time in the event of a drop in funding, to seek alternative funds, restructure and cut costs whilst continuing to provide current services.

The charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the needs of the organisation, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The reserves required should be sufficient to meet committed grant expenditure, personnel and overheads for a period equivalent to three months annual expenditure. The charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board of Directors will review the appropriateness of the policy annually. At year ended 31st March 2020 free reserves available amounted to the equivalent of just over 1 months' annual expenditure.

The strategic report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 21 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



.....  
Wilson Matthews Trustee

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2020 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2020 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	3	31,767	141,068	172,835
Investment income	4	197	-	197
Other income	5	600	-	600
Total Income		<u>32,564</u>	<u>141,068</u>	<u>173,632</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	6	(3,291)	-	(3,291)
Charitable activities	7	(13,531)	(120,555)	(134,086)
Other expenditure	8	(3,453)	-	(3,453)
Total Expenditure		<u>(20,275)</u>	<u>(120,555)</u>	<u>(140,830)</u>
Net income		12,289	20,513	32,802
Transfers between funds		<u>121</u>	<u>9,081</u>	<u>9,202</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds carried forward	16	<u>12,410</u>	<u>29,594</u>	<u>42,004</u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above period.

## Angel Eyes NI Services

(Registration number: NI633274)  
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2020

	Note	2020 €
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	13	6,752
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>43,333</u>
		50,085
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	14	<u>(8,081)</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>42,004</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>		
<b>Restricted funds</b>		29,595
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>		
Unrestricted funds		<u>12,409</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	16	<u>42,004</u>


For the financial year ending 31 March 2020 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements on pages 13 to 25 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 21 July 2020 and signed on their behalf by:



Wilson Matthews  
Trustee

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

#### **Investments**

Investments in non-convertible preference shares and non-puttable ordinary or preference shares (where shares are publicly traded or their fair value is reliably measurable) are measured at fair value through profit or loss. Where fair value cannot be measured reliably, investments are measured at cost less impairment.

Investments in subsidiaries and associates are measured at cost less impairment. For investments in subsidiaries acquired for consideration including the issue of shares qualifying for merger relief, cost is measured by reference to the nominal value of the shares issued plus fair value of other consideration. Any premium is ignored.

#### **Derivative financial instruments**

The charity uses derivative financial instruments to reduce exposure to foreign exchange risk and interest rate movements. The charity does not hold or issue derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes.

Derivatives are initially recognised at fair value at the date a derivative contract is entered into and are subsequently remeasured to their fair value at each reporting date. The resulting gain or loss is recognised in statement of financial activities immediately unless the derivative is designated and effective as a hedging instrument, in which event the timing of the recognition in statement of financial activities depends on the nature of the hedge relationship.

#### **Fair value measurement**

The best evidence of fair value is a quoted price for an identical asset in an active market. When quoted prices are unavailable, the price of a recent transaction for an identical asset provides evidence of fair value as long as there has not been a significant change in economic circumstances or a significant lapse of time since the transaction took place. If the market is not active and recent transactions of an identical asset on their own are not a good estimate of fair value, the fair value is estimated by using a valuation technique.

### **3 Income from donations and legacies**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>General £</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations and legacies;			
Donations from individuals	29,671	859	30,530
Gift aid reclaimed	571	-	571
Grants, including capital grants;			
Grants from other charities	1,525	140,209	141,734
	<u>31,767</u>	<u>141,068</u>	<u>172,835</u>

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

#### 4 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	Total 2020
	General £	£
Interest receivable and similar income; Interest receivable on bank deposits	197	197

#### 5 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Total 2020
	General £	£
Fees and supplies	600	600

#### 6 Expenditure on raising funds

##### a) Costs of generating donations and legacies

	Note	Total 2020 £
	Direct costs £	Total 2020 £
Costs of generating donations and legacies	3,291	3,291

Fundraising costs and activities to generate additional funds for general use within the Charity

#### 7 Expenditure on charitable activities

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2020
	Note	General £	£	£
Support for visually impaired children		7,298	13,516	20,814
Staff costs		5,153	106,271	111,424
Allocated support costs	9	288	-	288
Governance costs	9	792	768	1,560
		13,531	120,555	134,086
			<b>Activity undertaken directly</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
			£	£
Support for visually impaired children			132,526	132,526

£23,089 of the above expenditure was attributable to unrestricted funds and £109,437 to restricted funds.

All expenditure was in line with Funder requirements and was in furtherance of the Charity's objectives

#### 8 Other expenditure

		Unrestricted funds	Total 2020
	Note	General £	£
Legal fees		3,453	3,453
		3,453	3,453

#### 9 Analysis of governance and support costs

##### Governance costs

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2020
	General	funds	
	£	£	£
Independent examiner fees			
Examination of the financial statements	600	-	600
Allocated support costs	192	768	960
	<u>792</u>	<u>768</u>	<u>1,560</u>

#### 10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2020
	£
Staff costs during the year were:	
Wages and salaries	93,721
Social security costs	8,135
Pension costs	4,491
Other staff costs	5,077
	<u>111,424</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2020
	No
Front Line staff	4
Management	1
	<u>5</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

#### 11 Independent examiner's remuneration

	2020
	£
Examination of the financial statements	<u>600</u>



## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

#### 12 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

#### 13 Debtors

	2020 £
Trade debtors	6,048
Other debtors	704
	<hr/> 6,752 <hr/>

#### 14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £
Trade creditors	2,158
Other taxation and social security	1,268
Other creditors	3,815
Accruals	840
	<hr/> 8,081 <hr/>

#### 15 Pension and other schemes

##### Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £4,491 .

#### 16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<i>General</i>					
Unrestricted Funds	-	32,564	(20,276)	121	12,409
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Ulster University - Classroom Assistant training	-	4,745	(4,745)	-	-
Guide Dogs NI - Family Focus	-	30,608	(26,596)	2,786	6,798

## Angel Eyes NI Services

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
RNIB - Family Insight	-	42,463	(40,936)	3,000	4,527
Halifax	-	10,000	(12,182)	2,182	-
HSF O'Hanna	-	8,491	(8,491)	-	-
BBC CIN	-	4,502	(4,502)	-	-
Jordanstown Saturday Club	-	1,800	(1,800)	-	-
Arn Foundation	-	5,663	(6,005)	342	-
Paul Newman (Rockafella)	-	8,621	(9,392)	771	-
Awards for All	-	9,550	(3,780)	-	5,770
Specsavers	-	1,259	(1,259)	-	-
Sport-Ed (Include)	-	866	(866)	-	-
St James Place	-	2,500	-	-	2,500
Will Charitable Trust	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	-	141,068	(120,554)	9,081	29,595
<b>Other funds</b>					
Reserves brought Forward	9,202	-	-	(9,202)	-
<b>Total funds</b>	9,202	173,632	(140,830)	-	42,004

#### 17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	General £	£	£
Current assets	16,884	33,201	50,085
Current liabilities	(8,081)	-	(8,081)
<b>Total net assets</b>	8,803	33,201	42,004