



understanding our impact



VICTA 2023
Impact report
and accounts



EMPOWERING
BLIND
CHILDREN
YOUNG ADULTS

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We want to ensure that young people who are blind or partially sighted are equipped with both the skills they need for their future as well as the confidence and self-belief to achieve their goals. We are unwavering in our mission to help young people challenge limiting presumptions they and others have about their abilities.

CHAIR'S REVIEW

pamela lewis

There's never been an easy time to be young. But with a cost-of-living crisis and increasing pressure on education and employment, 2023 was as tough as it gets for young people.

The Prince's Trust NatWest Youth Index 2023 found young people's happiness and confidence at an all-time low with the resulting impact on mental health and wellbeing a constant concern. For young people living with a vision impairment the situation is markedly worse. Data compiled by the RNIB shows that VI children have lower educational attainment than children without a special educational need or disability; that there is a large wellbeing gap between teenagers with VI and their fully sighted peers; and that the progression of VI young people beyond education is not on a par with fully sighted young people.

Aware that feelings of isolation and loneliness are dominant within the world of visual impairment, at VICTA we focus on activity-based learning as a positive setting for social

interaction and personal growth. For our young people, involvement in group activities can be positively associated with social acceptance and a sense of belonging, especially where such involvement is characterised by positive coaching, progressive skill development and peer support. This is particularly meaningful, relevant, and necessary for VI students when they are preparing for transition into secondary education, higher education, or the workplace. We believe wellbeing, social connectedness, confidence & self-esteem help counter the physical, mental and emotional problems faced within the VI community.

Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, we continued to expand our reach in 2023. This expansion has enabled us to extend our programmes allowing

us to reach more young people living with a vision impairment and their families. This effort aligns seamlessly with the core priorities laid out in our 2023 -2025 Strategic Plan. This plan focuses on facilitating education and empowerment, fostering independence, and encouraging social inclusion. Our commitment to supporting young people on their path towards adulthood and independence has resulted in providing opportunities for personal growth, the acquisition of social skills, self-advocacy and building emotional resilience. This empowering experience opens doors and supports them to achieve their personal goals, shaping their active participation in society. Our young people remain at the heart of our organisation, driving us to remain centred around people, knowledge, adaptability, and the pursuit of positive change.

As we look back over the last year, we are incredibly indebted, once again, to our wonderful supporters for what they have helped us to achieve for young people who are blind or partially sighted.

In a voluntary sector that has become ever more competitive for funding, our supporters have consistently shown their commitment to our purpose, and through their generosity, VICTA has continued to find new ways to innovate and develop. We are delighted to report the start of a meaningful and highly valued relationship with the Vinchel Foundation who funded our Youth Programme.

And finally, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to our excellent Executive team for guiding us to deliver better outcomes for our young people and their families and to our

committed staff and volunteers who continue to support those who engage with our programmes. They have been central to everything we have achieved and have kept us true to our purpose.

Pamela Lewis
Chair, Board of Trustees



CEO STATEMENT

nick schofield

We've all paid a bit more attention to how connected we feel over the last couple of years. All of our work at VICTA speaks to the power of connection and the inspiration that can come from meeting your peers and talking things through with someone who understands you and appreciates your everyday challenges.

I'm really proud that our work has given so many young people who are blind or partially sighted the opportunity to meet other young people who are blind or partially sighted. We've always understood the power of connecting people, and appreciate that success isn't just about attainment, it is young people making confident and informed decisions that are right for them and their journeys.

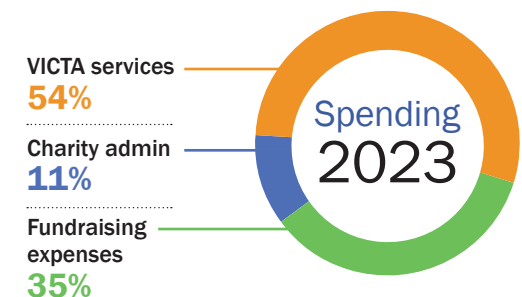
Over the past year, we've taken time to look at our strengths and consider what we need to change

to grow our impact and build our capability to deliver. As such, we've spent time joining up our internal functions and services. This is all backed up by stronger team, processes, procedures and systems, a reorganisation of our digital platforms, and of course, a sustainable financial performance. Change doesn't always happen in a linear way. As we saw with Covid-19, sometimes circumstances beyond our control create an environment in which change can happen. The reality is that we have embedded a new

delivery model and introduced a Young Achievers Award. And in responding to need, have refined our early years offer and strengthened the signposting within both our Student Portal and Parent Portal.

At VICTA we couldn't do any of this without our partners, and it's exciting to see just how much we've broadened who we work with across the year. I'd like to say a huge thank you to those partners, to our volunteers who bring our programmes to life and make them the success they are, and to our staff who impress every day with their creativity, endeavour and commitment to our goals.

Nick Schofield
Chief Executive



Strategic enablers

IMPACT REPORTING

VICTA is committed to measuring, analysing, and describing the impact we make for young people with a vision impairment and their parents across the UK.

We know our programmes can make a transformational difference for the young people we support, and we have started to report regularly on the impact our individual activities are making. However, given the nature, scale and diversity of our services, measuring and reporting on our impact on aggregate for a programme is no easy task.

As the first step on this journey, we have developed and introduced a series of questionnaires that help us measure our impact by asking the people we help questions about their wellbeing, understanding or skills base

when they start an activity and when they finish. This tells us we are making a positive difference. By this we mean that there is evidence to suggest an improvement based on outcome scores taken before and after an activity. We believe we have made a positive difference for many more children and young adults, but we do not yet have the data and analysis in place to demonstrate this with confidence. This is very much the baseline in measuring our impact across the charity, and in future years we will be able to provide much more detail, including evidence of how we have addressed specific challenges our young people and their families face.

VICTA's impact model applies recognised methods and values from tools such as Welbeck Edinburgh Mental Well Being Score and The UK Social Value Bank, HACT calculator, focussing on individual wellbeing as a determinant for social impact. The HACT calculator measures our social and environmental impact through improvements to wellbeing and savings made to the state. Very early application of this approach tells us that for every £1 invested into VICTA's Youth Programme, we evidenced social return of £11.20. A good start, but we have further to go.

DATA-LED DECISION-MAKING

We are deeply committed to demonstrating the difference we are making for children and young adults who are blind or partially sighted across the UK.

This is important to us for a number of reasons. Measuring impact determines our effectiveness. It allows us to drive quality and continuous improvement; it provides greater assurance to our partners supporters and funders; and most importantly, so we can be assured of the trust and confidence of the young people and families we serve.

We begin collecting data in the early stages of programme planning and assessment. Over the course of a programme, continuous data collection cycles and, where appropriate, evaluations allow us to analyse the changes that participants on

our activities are experiencing - whether positive or negative. We use those learnings to make short-term changes and improvements, while informing the way future programmes and associated activities are planned.

We harness technology to improve the experience that our supporters have in their interactions with us. Whether they're financial donors, customers or pro bono supporters and volunteers. We use data insights to create supporter journeys that provide supporters with different opportunities to engage at different stages. In recognition of this, in 2024 we will introduce a new more powerful CRM system.

VICTA VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are essential to our success. And in 2023, volunteers from across the UK generously gave their time, experience and expertise, supporting us to achieve our goals. Our team of volunteers help with everything from fundraising and spreading awareness of the challenges young people with a vision impairment face in their local communities, to supporting a family day to delivering a Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition.

The development of a new volunteering strategy has been a key focus for us this year. 2024 will see the introduction of an ambitious vision for the future of volunteering at VICTA and outlines a plan for how this will be achieved in the next couple of years. It was shaped by conversations and workshops with VICTA staff including volunteers, as well as insights gathered from volunteer feedback. We want to ensure that VICTA volunteers maximise their potential, have a transformative experience and provide better outcomes for more young people and the communities we serve.

As we move forward, we are looking at the appointment of

senior volunteers (including VI young adults who have used our services). We can draw on their delivery experience and understanding of the VICTA ethos to help us co-create and strengthen our volunteer strategy (alongside others in our community). We envisage senior volunteers acting in a mentor capacity for new VICTA volunteers; attending and taking an active role in key VICTA volunteering events such as the design of our Volunteering Training Weekend; identifying gaps in existing training and knowledge; developing content for National Volunteers Week; and supporting the VICTA Activities Team with volunteer recruitment and

retention strategies including the identification of future Senior Volunteers.

These are just a few examples of how we seek to expand the scope and range of our volunteer programmes to help us share ideas and co-ordination across the charity to fully leverage the power of volunteers. We understand that our services are enriched with the skills, experience and knowledge that volunteers bring.



our mission

Empowering children and young adults who are blind or partially sighted.



VICTA values

We're led by blind and partially sighted children and young adults and their families – we anticipate need and continuously develop new ways to add value to our relationships.

We value others – we behave in a way that promotes dignity and respect at work at all times and under all circumstances.

We're collaborative – we make it easy to work with us, so that together we can make the biggest difference.

We're creative – we understand challenges and find ways to overcome them.

We're inclusive – we include and value people with diverse experience, abilities and backgrounds.

We value professionalism – we strive for excellence. We're always receptive to better ways of working and better ways of delivering our services.

Why

Aware that feelings of isolation and loneliness are dominant within the world of visual impairment, we focus on activity-based learning as a positive setting for social interaction and personal growth.

For our young people, involvement in group activities can be positively associated with social acceptance and a sense of belonging, especially where such involvement is characterised by positive coaching, progressive skill development and peer support. This is particularly meaningful, relevant, and

necessary for VI students when they are preparing for transition into secondary education, higher education or the workplace. We believe wellbeing, social connectedness, confidence and self-esteem help counter the physical, mental & emotional problems faced within the VI community.

At age 14, VI young people are more than twice as likely than their sighted peers to often be unhappy, downhearted or tearful. While at age 17, VI young people are more than six times as likely to say they feel hopeless all or most of the time and five times as likely to say they feel depressed all or most of the time. Significantly, young people aged 16-25 with a VI are almost twice as likely as the general population to be in neither employment, education or training. And shockingly, blind and partially sighted people with a degree or higher still only have the same chance of getting a job as someone with no qualifications in the general population.

What

All our programmes are underpinned by constructivist models of learning in which young people are seen as active participants in the processes of seeking out knowledge, making sense of their experiences and gaining intrinsic satisfaction from learning and solving problems.

Related to this approach is sociocultural theory. Here a young person's active role in learning is set in the context of their membership of social groups and communities which jointly create knowledge through their engagement in purposeful and valued activities. Significantly, there is an evidence base from

the field of Positive Psychology that tells us when young people are taught how to use their strengths they develop wellbeing, and resilience as well as skills for learning and achievement. All of these are essential for promoting positive mental health and preventing mental health problems developing.



How

EARLY YEARS SENSORY DISCOVERY PACK

All children require a varied sensory diet: experience of different sensory sensations helps their sensory systems to fully mature and develop. Parents of VI early years children have told us they've sometimes struggled with play and interaction to support their child's development. Our sensory discovery packs have been carefully curated using input from parents and professionals to provide a sensory play starting point for parents.

A VICTA parent asked if they could include a supportive note of encouragement in one of our boxes to help a new family understand that they are not alone and that there are people who understand exactly what they are going through. Out of this wonderful idea our 2023 Christmas campaign emerged. The message of support campaign was so successful that it has been embedded in our 2024 programme.

PARENT EMPOWERMENT

Feedback from the 2022 Family Weekends told us that parents wanted information, guidance, and advice on how to confidently address issues and concerns in their local area relating to their VI child. For example, parents asked for support and information relating to the creation of VI teams as part of their local sports clubs, improving accessibility at social groups such as scouts, or simply how to go about finding other families in their local area that are experiencing similar issues.

Our response was the delivery of 'parent empowerment' workshops at our 2023 Family Weekends. The workshops were not designed to directly solve issues but aimed to equip parents with the skills, knowledge and confidence to get started. Parents were grouped together based on their location in the UK, with the intention that not only would new family connections be made, but common local issues could be discussed. VICTA Parent Services Lead, Charlotte Mellor, spoke to groups about her own experiences as a parent of a VI child as well as the workshops and resources available to parents through VICTA.

VICTA YOUNG ACHIEVERS

Understanding the needs and interests of all our stakeholders is fundamental to the success of our ambitions. We are continually looking at co-production and how we can engage the voice of our young people and their families in the development of our programmes. These conversations not only shape our thinking but direct our priorities. It is great to be able to say that our Young Achievers programme was parent driven and evolved from an idea discussed at our Spring Family Weekend 2022.

The scheme launched in January 2023 and has been designed to encourage children up to the age of 10 with sight loss to engage in learning and outdoor activities of their choice, helping them to grow in confidence, independence and resilience developed through experiences, not instruction. Experiences where they learn by doing, grow from failure, express their ideas and use their influence to drive positive outcomes.

SPECIALIST SLEEP SERVICE

Many aspects of human physiology and behaviour are dominated by 24-hour circadian rhythms that have a major impact on our health and well-being. These natural rhythms respond primarily to light and dark. Without light cues that the rest of us rely on to synchronize our body clocks, many people with sight loss suffer from cyclical episodes of poor sleep, reduced alertness, behaviour and mood issues, leading to mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression.

It is important to recognise that problems with sleep and mental health interact in both directions – sleep disturbances can be a risk for later mental health problems: people with poor mental health are typically poor sleepers. Parents have repeatedly asked for help to break this cycle. Our response was the launch of our Specialist Sleep Service in 2023. It offers practical support and advice for parents of young people aged 2 -17 years who are experiencing disturbances with sleep and/or bedtime routines.

LIONS CLUB INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 105A

Sensory Discovery Packs

With support from Lions Club International in Spring 2023 we launched a pilot programme testing the benefits of a Sensory Discovery Pack for parents to explore with their vision impaired babies and toddlers. Each pack contains eight items designed to assist a child's sensory needs up to the age of four years.



We released packs via a soft launch and conducted structured interviews with recipients to discover whether the items were having the impact we had intended. Within the first 6 weeks, we had distributed 50 packs to families in need, demonstrating the clear demand for this type of support. 100% of parents who were worried about their child's future and development felt more positive about their child's future and more confident in supporting their child needs. Only 40% were aware of VICTA before receiving the 'sensory discovery pack', with 100% articulating they felt more

connected to the vision impaired community. As told by one parent who took part in the pilot:

"We are still in the depths of the diagnosis and mourning but the pack gave us hope and encouragement... The ideas were really good as it gave me a way to change how I played with him."

Our aim is to support families at the beginning, with the hope that post-programme, they will transition onto rehabilitation & mobility services provided by Guide Dogs and RNIB.

Christmas appeal

We know how important it is to connect new parents, who may be feeling uncertain of the future, with families who have a wealth of lived experience. Our 1st Sensory Discover Pack Christmas Appeal raised

£1,379.50

with Giftaid and £1,247 excluding Giftaid, with 28 donors in total.

Families gave encouraging messages to pass onto to families who have recently received a diagnosis for their child's vision-impairment:

"My son is 24 and has early onset Leber's Amaurosis and light perception. My message is that being blind has not stopped him from doing anything he wants to. My advice is to get involved in VI sport. It provides opportunities, role models and networks of peers that have helped to make Sam the successful young man he is today. Remember anything is possible."

We would like to give a special thanks, to the friends and family who gave in memory of Amy Hawkins, donating £500 directly to the appeal. We look forward to continuing this appeal in the coming years, so that the VICTA community has further opportunities to support each other through challenging times.

THOMAS POCKLINGTON TRUST

Young Achievers

Fully funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust, we launched our Young Achievers Award in 2023. Designed around four themes, the award has been designed to actively engage and support young people from the age of five in their personal development, helping with self-belief, problem solving, self-management and communication skills. The idea is encourage children with sight loss to engage in learning and outdoor activities helping them to grow in confidence, independence and resilience developed through experiences, not instruction. Experiences where they learn by doing, grow from failure, express their ideas and use their influence to drive positive outcomes.

The award is based around four themes – Science. Nature + Wellbeing. Community. Create. Each theme has three discrete activities/challenges for participants to complete before they earn a unique VICTA badge.

If a young person completes all four themes, earning a badge for each, they are rewarded with a VICTA Young Achievers Medal.

These themes have been chosen to act as a gateway to the national award schemes administered by VICTA and available to older children.

- Arts Award (Create)
- Crest Awards (Science)
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award (Community)
- John Muir Award (Nature)
- WWF Green Ambassador 4 Youth Award (Sustainability)



I can't thank you enough for the amazing certificates and medals the boys have received. The Young Achievers Award has been amazing to do and the boys have enjoyed every minute. It has given them such a boost, often too many participating activities and sports are not differentiated for them to join in, but these have been amazing.

Seb really loved receiving his final badge and award for all four and is taking it into school on Friday as I think there is a school assembly show and tell, and the head likes to give a shout out to those pupils who have achieved something out of the ordinary! Seb really loves "his" charity and will tell anyone who will listen!



VINCHEL FOUNDATION

Youth Programme 2023

EMPOWERMENT – UNLOCKING POTENTIAL & FEEDING AMBITION

With the support of the Vinchel Foundation, VICTA delivered a youth programme for students aged 14 to 17 with a vision impairment.

Together we delivered a series of activities, residential camps and expeditions that focused on preparing students for academic and workplace readiness by strengthening social and academic confidence through teamwork and collaboration, fostering positive self-evaluation and self-advocacy, and engendering strong communication skills, resilience, and a good work ethic. Throughout the year of our

partnership, students aged 14-17 had the opportunity to receive up to 3 nationally recognised award schemes. We want them rather than their disability to stand out.

Within our original proposal we had an ambition to engage with 132 young people, it is pleasing to note that we exceeded this, directly supporting 137 vision impaired young people aged 14-17. We supported young people across 18 in-person and

online activities, delivering day and multi-day residential camps which provided them opportunities to build confidence and make connections without family members present. Vitally, our activities develop high-level thinking, communication, self-management and leadership skills in a safe peer-to-peer environment.

The VICTA Summer Camp is the highlight of the Youth Programme. It is an 8-day residential which this year supported 25 vision impaired young people. The camp provided these young

For every £1 the Vinchel Foundation invested into VICTA's Youth Programme, we evidenced:

social return of **£11.20**

which equates to

£464,685
of social impact in 2023.



I had a fun week, there's lots of great people to be around, especially if it's your first time away from home. It was a brilliant boost for my independence and I learned how to age a tree!

people with an opportunity to take part in adrenaline inducing and problem-solving outdoor activities such as raft-building and climbing. They were able to interact with and investigate the natural world and earn the John Muir Award. The John Muir Award is an environmental award scheme focused on wild places. It is inclusive, accessible and non-competitive and encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment through a structured yet adaptable scheme, in a spirit of fun, adventure

and exploration. We have a range of students from different background and educational settings join our Summer Camp, the majority of whom attend express a desire to expand their social network and challenge themselves.

I am able to adapt to new experiences, look after myself.

I feel more independent and more motivated than before I went. My Mum said she has really noticed the difference in me since coming home.

Social impact

VICTA's impact model applies recognised methods and values from tools such as Welbeck Edinburgh Mental Well Being Score and The UK Social Value Bank, HACT calculator, focussing on individual wellbeing as a determinant for social impact. The HACT calculator measures our social and environmental impact through improvements to wellbeing and savings made to the state. For every £1 the Vinchel Foundation invested into VICTA's Youth Programme, we evidenced social return of £11.20, which equates to £464,685 of social impact in 2023.

Insights from 2023 Youth Programme across 18 daytrips, workshops, residentials and competitions

- **80%** reported an improved ability to empathise and work with others.
- **60%** reported an improved ability to negotiate.
- **80%** reported improved decision making and problem-solving skills.
- **80%** reported feeling more resilient.
- **70%** reported improved leadership skills.
- **80%** reported an increase in personal motivation to achieve their goals.
- **98%** felt they had made new friends.

Parent feedback:

- **100%** reported witnessing their vision impaired child feeling good about themselves after attending an activity.
- **90%** reported witnessing their vision impaired child having increased confidence.
- **90%** reported witnessing their vision impaired child feeling more positive and optimistic about the future.
- **80%** reported witnessing their vision impaired child have a renewed interest in meeting new people.

Social impact

ALASTAIR TULLOCH, DONCASTER,
VICTA SUMMER CAMP, 2023



What's next for our young people?

- **100%** expressed their aspirations to continue in Education (GCSE, 6th form or college to receive qualifications).
- **70%** expressed their aspirations to enter university.
- **100%** expressed their aspirations to start a career.
- **100%** expressed their aspirations to be a role model for others.
- **100%** expressed their aspirations to develop strong relationships with a variety of people.
- **70%** expressed their aspirations to join a club (sports, theatre, youth).
- **90%** expressed their aspirations to volunteer in the future.

The power of transition

- **33%** of students within our Pre-Teen 2023 Programme will transition into our Youth Programme in 2024.
- **35%** of young people within our 2023 Youth Programme will transition into our Young Adults Programme in 2024.

As one mother explained:

There are so few activities or clubs available for my daughter. The availability of so many activities for her to be included in, is the best thing about Summer Camp. She had a wonderful time, it was a huge step outside her comfort zone to attend and the activities challenged her both mentally and physically. The activity day has given her a much-needed boost to her self-esteem and confidence. Many thanks to everybody involved.



THOMAS POCKLINGTON TRUST

Get Workplace Ready

Being given the opportunity to partake in the get ready for employment course has really opened my eyes up to the world of work and given me ideas on how to tackle seeking and maintaining work. Also being able to do team-building activities with the other members of the group was such a nice way to get to know people and strengthen bonds beyond the classroom. It was truly an invaluable week and I extend my thanks to the Thomas Pocklington trust for funding the course and I look forward to what the rest of the duration of the course has to bring and beyond also.

Fully funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust, VICTA and Royal National College for the Blind (RNC) launched their pilot three-month Ofqual regulated employability course in October 2023. The Get Workplace Ready course was introduced to eight unemployed young adults, identified as being one-step removed from the labour market,

at a six-day residential at RNC in Hereford. Using cognitive behavioural group approaches and coaching, the programme is designed to help participants (re-)discover their career goals, tackle fear of failure, increase self-confidence and improve their wellbeing, in order to take first positive steps towards the labour market.

For every £1 Thomas Pocklington Trust invested into VICTA's Get Work Ready course, we evidenced:

social return of **£8.05**

which equates to

£118,809
of social impact in 2023.



Over 10 classroom-led and four activity-based, friendly and interactive sessions in combination with targeted 1:1 support, attendees learned how to become aware and take control of their inner dialogue and rediscover their personal strengths. Participants also explored basic (self-)coaching skills and will receive employability coaching for a further three months to support sustainable outcomes. Participants have also been encouraged to think about themselves as peer mentors to each other thereby building a support network that will exist

beyond the duration of the programme and further support positive outcomes.

Offsite structured activities included tenpin bowling, axe throwing, indoor archery and goalball. These were chosen to support social skills development with tasks designed to build problem-solving abilities, resilience, perseverance, confidence and teamwork. Experience shows us that these sessions built trust and confidence and in turn strengthened friendships.

I was in 2 minds about the course as I feel home sick, but this week has been beautiful for me. This training showed a different perspective, I believe this approach should be in every school. You made us feel involved, accepted, valued and part of it without hierarchy. Thank you so much.



What did you most like about the programme?

- 'I liked how engaging it was and that we didn't spend hours on our laptops. Instead taking a more listen and discussion approach which suits my learning preferences best'.
- 'Never felt like a lecture, or a listen'.
- 'How engaging and helpful the sessions were'.
- 'The whole course was very good structured. It was a real pleasure to work with such trainers'.

I didn't know what to expect but I've made friends for life. Here we can speak openly, transparently and gain workplace insight particularly around disclosure and knowing when to disclose and how it helps. I have learnt about myself; I can move forward and look at my strengths that I have previously suppressed due to past experiences. It provided closure for my negative work experiences. Thank you to VICTA for bringing all of these professionals together.



The VICTA difference first-hand stories

Lily's story

Lily is a 16-year-old young person who has attended VICTA activities since she was 10 years old, she is now on the GB Paralympic development team for skiing.

“At my first VICTA activity, I felt really nervous, because I get anxious about meeting new people. I was really worried about not meeting anyone or connecting with anyone. Since taking part in VICTA activities, I've made a dozen or more friends, I've met so many amazing people and it just really boosts your confidence to have loads of lovely people around you.

VICTA has just been a place that I could go to connect with people who were just like me, who I could share a load of experiences with. It was a place to get away, because I go to a mainstream school and so it is nice to be around people who are going through the same thing as me. It's a safe place.”

Lily's story would be incomplete without understanding the impact VICTA has had on the whole family, as put by Lily's mother:

“My teen is very isolated in her mainstream school, and she has no friends – here, she hangs around in a gaggle of teens and does everything a teen should be doing. She is more independent, and she laughs! All the family get so much out of VICTA activities.

My children get to meet up with friends, meet new ones, they have someone who understands and can take part in activities without feeling they are being watched. It's also really good for parents to take part in something without worrying about their children.”

Jasper's story

Jasper first attended one of VICTA's activities when he was 5 years old, since then, he has taken part in VICTA's family activities every year, he is now 10 years old, a scout and has started learning German with his dad. Speaking with Jasper's parents helps to articulate the journey many of our families take:

"The moment you are told your child has got a vision impairment, you think "that's it, that's the end of the world, there's nothing we can do now", it is quite isolating. Getting involved in days out and meeting other families you realise, "actually it is not the end of the world". Jasper has been quite inspired some of the volunteers with vision impairments. We meet people who are living independently, they have

received qualifications, are in employment and that has really helped him and encouraged him. His vision impairment isn't a blocker anymore, its inspirational" (Jasper's Mother). "Coming here has made Jasper look at his vision impairment less of a problem and more just as a part of his life. Meeting other children with similar conditions have made him think "I'm not on my own." (Jasper's Father).

Eddy's story

Eddy joined VICTA as a young adult, attending our activities as well as volunteering and running the London marathon for us.

"As a young adult, before attending VICTA activities, I was unsure about the things I was good at, and I was a bit apprehensive when getting involved in new things. I definitely think I didn't feel confident speaking with new people, feeling out the room or making sure that I was heard. I didn't really know what I was good at and the things I wanted to do. I almost didn't know myself that well.


Attending VICTA activities definitely helped me come out of my shell. My involvement in VICTA definitely helped to bring some interesting points to interviews and application forms because I was able to say I've volunteered abroad, delivered workshops and engaged in fundraising. It helped add an extra layer for employers. I am now a consultant in central London, working with the UK's largest financial institutions."



2023

AT A GLANCE

7.2
(FTE)



members
of staff

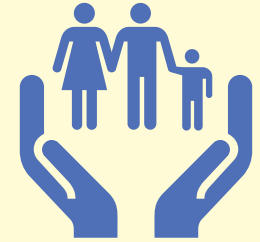


50



1,036

people reached
and supported



33



1,887

In-person
activities

staff hours dedicated to
in person activity delivery

SUPPORTED BY

45

VICTA volunteers



4,312

hours volunteered

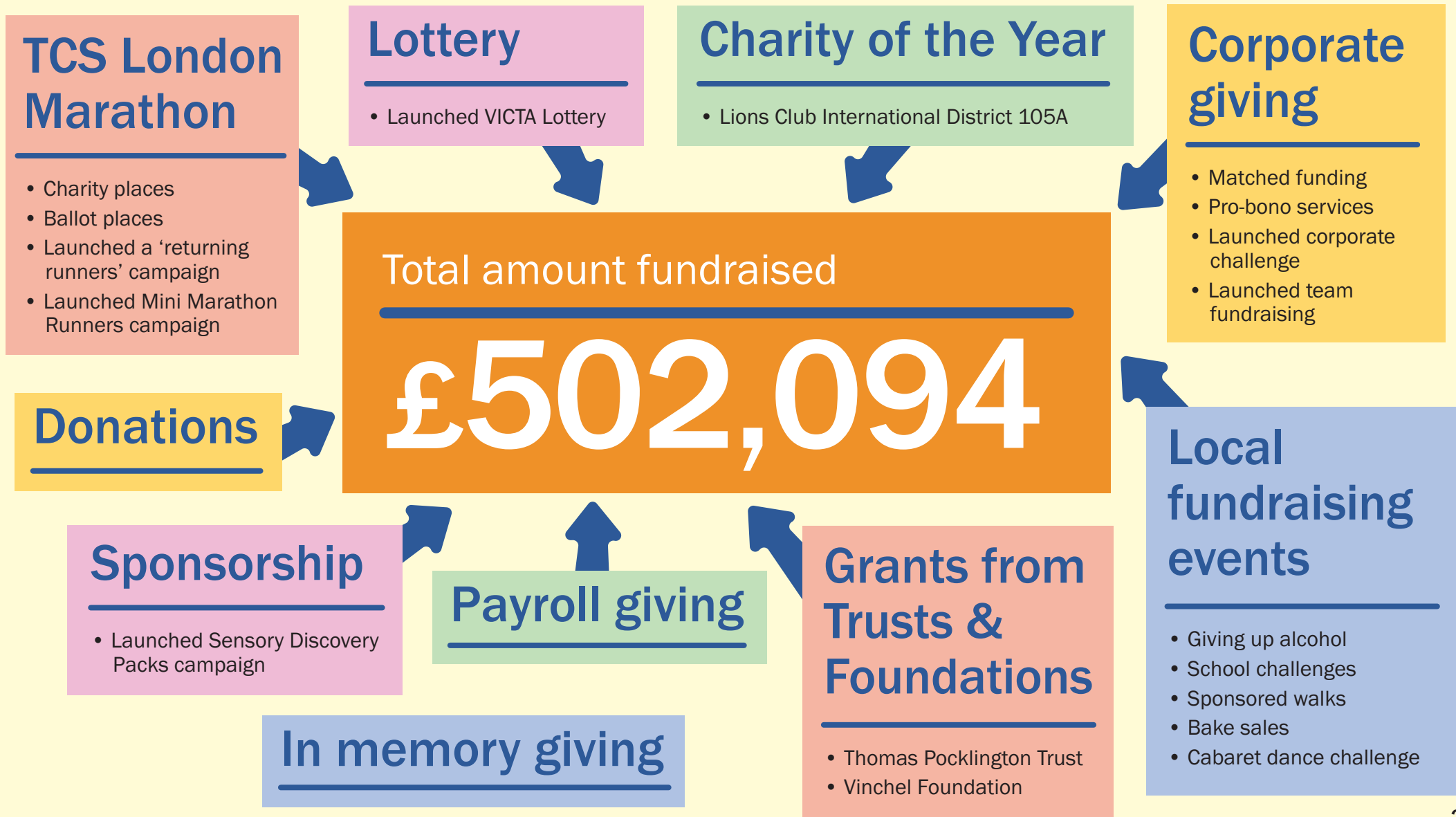
15



who have a vision impairment



Year 1 of a new fundraising strategy – diversifying our income generation





2023 financial accounts

charity details

Key Staff and Trustees

Nick Schofield, Chief Executive

Pamela Lewis, Chair

Special responsibility for finance

Gurvinder Kaur, Trustee

Special responsibility for legal matters

Elizabeth Richards, Trustee

Special responsibility grants

Christian Sprenger, Trustee

Special responsibility for engagement, fundraising and marketing

Our Patrons

Michel Roux Jr

Michel Roux Jr took over the helm at the world famous Michelin starred Le Gavroche in 1991. Since then, Michel has won numerous awards for his cuisine and has continued to set the standard for classical French fine dining in London. Prior to Le Gavroche, Michel honed his skills working for master chefs in Paris, Lyon, Hong Kong and London, spending two years with Alain Chapel and cooking at the Elysee Palace for President Mitterrand.

Michel has also been a judge alongside Greg Wallace on Masterchef: The Professionals. Michel has been a great supporter of VICTA Children for many years, he continues to run in the London Marathon raising money to help us to provide our services.

Mardy Smith OBE

Mardy worked at New College Worcester (NCW), a residential school for students who are blind or partially sighted for 27 years, including the last 13 years as Principal. She retired at Christmas 2016 but maintains her commitment to ensuring young people who are blind or partially sighted have a wide range of opportunities and challenges. In addition to such experiences resulting in enjoyment and achievement, the positive impact on self-esteem and self-confidence is invaluable and Mardy is pleased to be able to support VICTA in their work with young people and their families.

Clarke Reynolds

Clarke Reynolds is registered severely sight impaired and is a successful visual artist. His artistic language is Braille, the tactile coding system which is made up of a six-dot cell and allows people of low vision to read. As a Braille typographer and artist, Clarke takes the tactile braille experience and gives it a visual language. His aim is to bring Braille into the 21st century through workshops, exhibitions and public art. He is passionate about being a role model for people of all ages with a vision impairment.

As words are important to a vision impaired person, Clarke's art explores the power of the English language and uses the Braille dot as a vessel to hold that word through the shape, colour and size of the dot. Over the past two years Clarke has held multiple exhibitions including his first solo show in London at the Quantus gallery.

Abbie Robinson

Abbie is a competitive climber from the North East. Having grown up an active, adventurous person, Abbie started indoor climbing when she was 13 at her local climbing wall in Sunderland. At 17, she was diagnosed with Stargardt Macular Dystrophy and registered legally blind. It was then that she was introduced to the world of paraclimbing and quickly went on to join the GB Paraclimbing Team, so far securing 7 international gold medals, including 3 consecutive world championship titles.

Having initially struggled to come to terms with the label of being 'disabled', Abbie is passionate about showing the world that disability does not have to be a barrier to success, independence or adventure. She is keen to make sport accessible for all in the hope that other people with disabilities can find the same freedom, confidence and strength through sport that she did.

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

charity details

Registered Charity Details

Registered Charity Name

VICTA Children Ltd

Charity Registration Number

1065029

Company Registration Number

03424608

Principal Office

Challenge House
Sherwood Drive
Milton Keynes
MK3 6DP

Auditors

A J Bennewith & Co

Upper Ground Floor
18 Farnham Road
Guilford
Surrey
GU1 4XA

Bankers

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hall
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Metro Bank

44-46 Midsummer Arcade
Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 3BB

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

statement of financial activities

(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)

	(£)	Total Funds 2023 (£)	Total Funds 2022 (£)
INCOME			
Income from generating funds:			
Donations and legacies		38,955	102,523
Other trading activities			
Fundraising events	5,922		
Marathon runners	327,806		
Sundry income	89,249	422,977	546,000
Income from investments		8,387	1,676
Gift aid		31,775	27,055
TOTAL INCOME		502,094	677,254
EXPENDITURE			
Charitable activities	336,067		
Marathon fundraising costs	165,060		
Charity administration	69,166		
Other fund raising costs	52,280		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		622,573	590,033
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR		-120,479	87,221
Prior Year Adjustment		-41,500	
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward		529,836	442,615
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		367,857	529,836

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

balance sheet

(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)

	(£)	Total Funds 2023 (£)	Total Funds 2022 (£)
FIXED ASSETS			
Office equipment and computers		3,378	4,902
CURRENT ASSETS			
Inventory	15,131		9,124
Marathon Places brought forward	81,100		99,980
Other debtors and prepayments	589,922		249,002
Cash at bank	431,505		445,053
	<u>1,117,658</u>		<u>803,159</u>
CREDITORS:			
Amounts falling due within one year			
Cheque payments not yet cashed			-
Trade creditors	6,448		42,431
PAYE and social security	8,550		6,187
Marathon income received in advance	593,661		211,608
Other creditors including grants approved but not yet delivered	19,059		17,999
Reserved Funds for 2024	125,461		
	<u>753,179</u>		<u>278,225</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>364,479</u>	<u>524,934</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>367,857</u>	<u>529,836</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>367,857</u>	<u>529,836</u>
FUNDS			
Designated funds		279,500	308,000
General funds		88,357	176,086
		<u>367,857</u>	<u>529,836</u>

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime and were approved by the members of the committee and authorised for issue and were signed by Pamela Lewis on 21 06 2024 on behalf of the Charity.

The audited financial statements can be found on the VICTA website and are available on both the Companies House and Charity Commission web sites.



VICTA

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Sherwood Drive
Milton Keynes
MK3 6DP

01908 240831
victa.org.uk

VICTA Children Ltd. Charity No. 1065029.

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EMPOWERING
BLIND
CHILDREN
YOUNG ADULTS