

We See Ability

Impact Report 2020

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CEO statement

At SeeAbility we're passionate about supporting people with disabilities to achieve their goals. That could mean working with someone to find employment for the first time, supporting them to learn new life skills, or helping them to find that special someone. We've made great strides this year on achieving our strategic aims and we know we have a long way to go; we're not short of ambition and I'm thrilled that we're making such a big difference working alongside people we support and their families, which is demonstrated in this year's Impact Report.

We believe passionately that everyone we support should feel able to dream big and have the same opportunities that we'd expect from our own lives. That's why ensuring their voices are heard is so vitally important and why we were thrilled when Scott Watkin BEM, our Head of

Engagement, was recognised for his outstanding commitment to improving the lives of people with learning disabilities and autism, and was named as one of the most influential people with a disability in the UK as part of The Shaw Trust Disability Power List 100. Scott is mentoring our new Associates Team, Gabby, Greg and Emily, who all have lived experience of disabilities and share a common goal – they all want to become campaigners and future leaders. They used last year’s snap general election to make their mark by writing to all the party leaders and local candidates with their mini manifesto. They talk more about their ambitions later in this report.

Our team of Eye Care Champions, most of whom have lived experience of learning disabilities, autism and/or sight loss, also hit the ground running in the first year of this newly funded three year project. Using SeeAbility’s accessible resources, they’ve been helping adults with learning disabilities and autism learn about vital eye care and how to access the services they need in their local communities.

Over the past year we’ve been privileged to support even more people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss in their homes across the South of England. We’ve helped people to move into their new homes in Oxfordshire and Kent. But helping people achieve their potential isn’t just about the impact it has on them as individuals; I’m acutely aware of the numerous pressures and challenges that families routinely face when trying to secure the right support for their family member. Many parents feel no-one but themselves can provide the emotional support their family member needs, and as they themselves grow older, worry how their son or daughter will be supported throughout their lives. So I was delighted to see that, when the parents of people we support were asked to share their thoughts about the impact of the support their loved ones receive from SeeAbility, time and time again, they used the phrase ‘peace of mind’.

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic towards the end of the reporting year brought many challenges and, for the social care sector, the spotlight was shone on our work as never before.

Finally, for the first time in my career, social care was getting the recognition it deserves. I hope our important work will continue to be recognised long after this is over, both as a career of choice and a public service. People who work in social care change lives.

I think the words of Joann, a lady we support in Surrey, say it all; when asked about the difference made by her support staff and volunteers, she responded: "It has helped me to become more independent in so many ways and areas. SeeAbility's support has helped to give me the will of living a meaningful life."

Lisa Hopkins, CEO

How we make a difference

"The support is 100% person centred... The staff have a very 'can do' approach - by that I mean that they see each person as a person and not just their disability. They help her try new things and safely step out of her comfort zone." Local Authority Care Manager

Making inclusion a reality for people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss is what drives us at SeeAbility. Our work is all about people – supporting them to grow in confidence, lead independent lives and make their own choices.

Over the past year we've been working hard to improve how we measure what's important; not in an effort to box tick, but because the data is vital if we are to know how and where we're making a difference.

Illustrating how our support can lead to better outcomes for people we're supporting (and understanding the way our unique specialisms and areas of expertise interact) is helping us to make sense of how all those working or volunteering at SeeAbility are making a difference.

The strongest themes to emerge this year are improvements in how people feel about inclusion, with increased satisfaction with the support that enables people to be actively involved in the community, doing the things they enjoy.

Whether this is through providing more creative and ambitious support so people are in charge of their own care and gaining skills and independence, running distinct eye care programmes for those with learning disabilities, or providing expert support for those with juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease, this work takes us further towards that goal. And we will always look outwards – we're determined to see people with

disabilities having more opportunities and a greater voice.

Gabby, Emily and Greg, our new Associates, are testament to that.

People get more ambitious and creative support

Hi, my name is Gabby. When I was asked to write about the support SeeAbility offers, I decided to describe the change in me from when I first moved to my SeeAbility flat, to how I feel now, five years later.

I guess I would say I feel a lot more independent, confident and able to go out and about!

The SeeAbility team took their time to really get to know me and learn about me and my health needs, and helped me learn the new skills I wanted to develop. When I first moved I didn't even know how to make a cup of tea. Now I do! And I was nervous about going out in my car. Now I'm not!

I have a close knit family and I would say that SeeAbility are my second family. Getting a good support team around you is vital, and I feel able to have my say when things aren't going so well. That's important too – just as you would with any family!

There is a lot of expertise within SeeAbility – there are people who specialise in speech and language therapy, positive behaviour support, physiotherapy and vision rehabilitation. They are all able to offer advice and different ideas on how to provide the right support, and make it work for each individual person.

In my case, my vision rehab worker Sam has helped me and my support staff understand how I best use my vision – teaching me how to cook and how to get out and about confidently and safely.

I don't think I would have applied to be an Associate five years ago. But the training has boosted my confidence, I'm meeting more leaders and now I'm raring to go - I've even joined Twitter! Follow me @GabbyGibbons

The difference SeeAbility has made

- Over 95% of people we support and their family/friends say our overall support is good to very good.
- Our new Learning into Action Programme has led 93% of staff to teach a new individualised skill to a person we support.
- 95% of our services are rated as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission.
- 85% of our staff are trained in positive behaviour support.
- We helped people achieve a 24% decrease in the number of incidents of behaviour of concern
- in their first year with us.
- 94% of people we support have had an annual person centred review.

People get more ambitious and creative support

Our expert approach to supporting Danny demonstrates the tangible difference that our specialist support can make. The support is truly person-centred, focusing on working collaboratively with each person to understand their behaviours. No one had taken the time to understand Danny before, but when we stepped in, it changed his life.

Danny's story

Danny has always wanted to get the most out of life. Meeting him now, you can see this clearly. Behind his warm smile is a determined, ambitious attitude that says he's always open to new experiences and opportunities.

But it hasn't been an easy journey for Danny. When he first moved into SeeAbility's Fiennes House, he'd been struggling through a difficult period with his mental health. Over the previous 10 months, he'd had 5 different

services break down, as support teams struggled to engage with his frustrations. One service asked him to leave after 24 hours.

At first, Danny carried frustrations over to Fiennes House. Understandably, he had become disillusioned and his guard was up. At previous homes he couldn't get the ambitious support he craved, so initially at Fiennes House he'd use threats to try to get what he wanted.

But the SeeAbility team took a different approach, focusing on recognising and understanding his frustrations. Sarah, the Fiennes House manager, explains:

"We treat him like the adult he is, and that's changed his life. We talk with him about what frustrates him and offer strategies to help him process those emotions. A lot of what Danny struggles with is related to past trauma, so we've gradually learnt what triggers those bad memories."

Today Danny finally feels he has found a support team who genuinely listens to him. He's formed a real bond with Senior Support Worker, Kelly. In 2019, he presented her with a SeeAbility Excellence Award, saying:

"Kelly is a good listener, she's kind and helps me understand feelings better."

As Danny's mental wellbeing has improved, he's been able to start living the life he always wanted. Last October, the team took him clubbing for the first time, shifting their schedules so they could support him to stay out late. He's been out plenty of times since! We want to learn from Danny's lived experience, so he is now a paid SeeAbility employee, leading training on person-centred support.

Now that Danny feels more confident, we're looking at supporting him to move out. He'll have his own place, but still have access to our support. It's a huge step forward for Danny's independence, and one of his biggest dreams. We're so excited to share it with him.

People get more ambitious and creative support

One of our key specialisms is Vision Rehabilitation. We are leading experts in supporting people with learning disabilities who also have sight loss. We assess the vision of every person we support, because we know that not everyone is able to easily express what they can see. Sammy's story proves just how life-changing and valuable these tests can be.

Sammy's story

Sammy is one of the warmest and most welcoming people you're likely to meet. Within just a few minutes of meeting her, she'll already have sat you down and found out all about your pets.

When we first met Sammy, we were told she had no vision whatsoever – her eyes were rarely open, and when they were, it didn't change how she interacted. For over forty years, she was considered blind.

But at SeeAbility, we don't assume anything. Jenny, one of our vision rehabilitation workers, explains:

"Whenever we meet someone new, we carry out functional vision assessments (FVA). You never know what you'll discover, but Sammy blew me away."

An FVA involves a series of tests through which our experts can work out how much someone can practically use their sight. As Sammy communicates using Makaton rather than words, it's especially crucial, as she would otherwise struggle to explain her sight.

"I started the assessment with a flashing ball and instantly she brought it to her eye. Then I drew a smiley face but left out an eye. She brought it up close, and after a moment drew in the missing eye. I said to her 'You can see!' and she nodded her head, laughing!"

Through this, Jenny worked out that Sammy does actually have some vision, but that she'd never learnt how to use it. This soon became a real challenge, as when Jenny took Sammy to hospital for a full eye examination, she closed her eyes tightly and wouldn't participate. Gradually, they worked on different wording and ran role play scenarios to explain the hospital experience.

For the second trip to hospital, Jenny accompanied Sammy. This time, she understood everything. They found that her eyes caused discomfort when opened, and prescribed her daily drops.

But supporting Sammy to open her eyes was just the start. Jenny is now working with Sammy to help her understand her vision.

“Often Sammy is moving too quickly to take in her surroundings, so she’s learning to turn slowly to scan the environment. One breakthrough was when we encouraged her to visually locate one of her friends to share a box of biscuits. She slowly scanned the room, and when she got there, they were both so proud.”

“We often take for granted what our vision can do. She has possibly spent her whole life feeling isolated, as no one has understood her vision. Finding friends herself is a huge step towards inclusion.”

People are better able to benefit from preventative services

I’m Emily, one of the Associates working to change things for the better for people with disabilities. I know first-hand how difficult it can be for people to be aware of their rights, especially when simple things like accessibility are often overlooked.

Some of the disabilities and conditions I have mean I spend an awful lot of time either in a GP or hospital waiting room or seeking information in appropriate formats, as I have sight loss. When we meet up as an Associates Team I find myself talking about health a lot, so I’m not surprised to have been asked to introduce this section!

It’s so important that people with learning disabilities get good support with their health - it’s shocking that people can die of often preventable health conditions much earlier than in the general population, or are drugged up with medication they don’t need. I know SeeAbility have been doing a lot of work on these issues helping people as a whole, and the specialist support for people with the rare juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease is one example of this.

My experience of sight loss also means I feel really proud about the work

that SeeAbility is doing to make sure people with learning disabilities get good eye care – starting in special schools where we hope to see completion of the NHS commitment to introduce specialist sight tests this year.

We definitely need more training and awareness out there on these issues and I'm looking forward to speaking up about this in the coming year!

The difference SeeAbility has made

- In their first year our 7 Eye Care Champions have directly reached over 3,500 people (both people with learning disabilities, supporters and professionals).
- 97% of people we support said we were meeting their health and eye care needs and had an up to date Health Action Plan.
- We have seen 819 children for a complete eye and vision assessment and dispensed 501 pairs of glasses in 8 special schools.
- 12 families directly supported, and 20 health professionals engaged in our new outreach nurse work with children and young people with rare juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease.

People are better able to benefit from preventative services

At SeeAbility, we believe that everyone should get the right information and support they need, no matter the complexity of their health conditions. Often, families of people with complex and rare conditions can feel isolated and struggle to access the right support. Through our juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease outreach service, we're ensuring that everyone with this rare condition can easily access our expert advice.

Reaching out

For over twenty years, SeeAbility has supported people with juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease at Heather House in Tadley. This year, SeeAbility started reaching out.

“Our outreach work supports families of people with CLN3 disease. They can feel very isolated, as there are only 50-60 people with the condition in the UK,” says Sarah, our Outreach Nurse.

Sarah has 30 years’ experience with CLN3 disease and managed Heather House for almost 20 years. Her unique specialist knowledge about this extremely rare disease means she can provide parents with vital advice that goes beyond the specialisms of most doctors.

“I’m really here to support families and give them advice. A few months into this role I got a call from a single parent who is raising two children with CLN3 by herself. She started crying at the end of the call, saying, ‘I’m not crying because I’m unhappy, I’m crying because I found you’. That’s why I’m here.”

Juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease is a terminal condition that can cause a vast array of health complications. Sadly, most adults with CLN3 disease die in their 20s and 30s. However, with high-quality support, people can still live fulfilling lives.

“People with Battens have a lot of living to do,” says Sarah. “Children are often given a wheelchair too soon, their needs aren’t understood, and they die early. I help people understand each step so they’re not always assuming the worst.

It means people can focus on actually enjoying their lives.”

One parent got in touch with Sarah, saying that her daughter was screaming 4-5 times a day, every day. She sent a video, and Sarah immediately recognised the signs of gastric reflux.

“I know that gastric reflux is extremely common in CLN3, but it’s never mentioned in the books. I only know from my experience.”

Sarah wrote a letter to the GP and he prescribed the reflux medication. Within days, the screaming stopped.

“Most other professionals would’ve thought they were fits and given her drugs to make her drowsy, but the pain would have remained. They may

have even said she was reaching the end. Instead I was able to relieve her pain in just six days.”

It’s this expert knowledge that puts SeeAbility in a truly unique position, able to support people in a way that no one else can.

People are better able to benefit from preventative services

With NHS England promising to provide sight tests in all special schools as a result of SeeAbility campaigning, we are making sure that adults with learning disabilities are able to access eye care support in their local communities. Our Eye Care Champions’ work is crucial in making sure that people with higher risk of developing sight problems, such as Kylie, know how to get the right support.

Kylie’s story

Before the SeeAbility Eye Care Champions became involved, Kylie (not her real name) had no idea how important a sight test was.

“I hadn’t been for a sight test in years!” says Kylie. “Just thinking about it made me nervous.”

As someone with type 2 diabetes, Kylie should have been having regular sight tests and more specific checks too. Kylie is in a particularly at-risk group - diabetic retinopathy is one of the leading causes of preventable sight loss in the UK, but all too frequently, people with the condition only realise there’s a problem when it’s too late.

Her learning disability is another factor, as people with learning disabilities are ten times more likely to have a serious sight problem.

Fortunately, through her self-advocacy group Kylie received training from SeeAbility’s Eye Care Champions which changed her life. The Champions are responsible for ensuring adults with learning disabilities and autism are informed about vital eye care and how to access the services they need, in their local communities.

“Before the training, I had no idea about eye care. No one ever explained how important it is for me.”

As soon as she got home from the training, Kylie booked herself a sight test. The optometrist found she needed glasses for reading, and another pair for long distance.

“I used to wear cheap glasses, but they gave me headaches. I don’t get them any more with the new glasses.

Now, Kylie can enjoy her favourite activities, watching Miss Marple on TV and reading books. The experience has made her a passionate advocate for health related issues. She’s become a vocal and confident member of her advocacy group, and uses her story to encourage others to look at all aspects of their health.

“These glasses have changed my life in lots of different ways! I’m so glad the Eye Care Champions encouraged me!”

Through the training with the SeeAbility Eye Care Champions, Kylie is now eye care aware. She is going to appointments regularly so that the optometrists can monitor her eye health and quickly deal with any future issues. As someone with diabetes and a learning disability, these timely interventions could end up saving her sight.

More people are participating and contributing to society

Hi, I’m Greg. There is lots to know about me and maybe the number one thing is that I’m a massive sports fan!

I also happen to have a disability. That shouldn’t stop me enjoying being a spectator at the sports I love, but all too often I find that it does. Often people see my wheelchair before they see me - and despite all the good work that’s gone into making sports venues more accessible – official ‘policies’ sometimes dictate I can’t sit with my family or friends, and I can still find myself in demeaning situations.

When I saw that SeeAbility wanted to create a new Associates Team

I jumped at the chance, because I want to help people in similar situations to me.

I'm pretty political too and I want politicians to listen to us. One of our first jobs as an Associate Team was to draw up a manifesto for some of the big changes we'd like to see. Some of what we want is bound to take time, but giving up and not doing anything is not an option for me. We're learning how to campaign and learning from other organisations too – it's always good to join forces!

I've been supported by SeeAbility – both staff and volunteers - to do the things that I love, as well as things that are out of my comfort zone. I'm a regular speaker at my old specialist college where I talk to students about their future. I hope that my work with SeeAbility will lead on to other things – I would love to have a regular slot in a magazine!

Follow me on Twitter @fanaticsports31

The difference SeeAbility has made

- 95% of people say we are helping them maintain and develop new skills.
- This year we also asked how we were doing helping people meet new people, and make new friends. Over 93% said we were doing a good job.
- 6.7% of our workforce have a disability. Our aim is for this to be at least
- 10% by the end of our strategy.
- 93% said we were doing a good or very good job of helping them be active in their community, doing things they enjoy.
- 4 people we support are paid induction trainers, training staff who are new to SeeAbility.

More people are participating and contributing to society

At SeeAbility we recognise that everyone we support has their own dreams and ambitions, and we're always determined to give them the support they need to achieve them. Tim's story shows just how the right support and the right team can really empower someone to reach for their goals.

Tim's story

Tim knows what he wants to get out of life. Aged 21, he has a bucket list that includes watching a game at Anfield, going to Comic-Con and seeing Queen live in concert.

Since moving into a new home with SeeAbility's support, he's taken time to reflect on how he can build the life that he wants. At his previous home, he was supported in a group with lots of other people and didn't get the personalised and tailored support he needed to help him grow.

"It was like a hostel," says Kelly, the manager of Kennington Support Service. "He never had the right people to offer him full-on, quality support, or the stability to focus on his goals. He'd spend most days just wandering around town and then heading home."

With his new support team, however, Tim is starting to take steps in a positive new direction.

"There's so much I wanted to do, but my money doesn't go a long way so I needed a job to get some extra income."

But just getting any job wouldn't have been satisfying for Tim. He knew that he had to be doing something he enjoyed. Tim and the team worked with the council and secured a placement in a local music shop. As a huge music-lover, the job was perfect.

"It's more than just a job, I really enjoy being around people who have the same interest in music."

The team have also been working with Tim on budgeting, so he saves money for what's important to him.

"We're helping him to understand his money," says Kelly. "He's been exploited financially in the past, and he can spend money a bit irresponsibly. We've worked out a weekly budget with him, so he knows the money he's got available each week if he wants to save up for longer term goals."

Together, they separated the weekly money into envelopes, each covering a different area of expenditure. Through working on this aspect of his life, he feels his goals are more achievable.

"The support here has really helped me understand what I have to do, to get where I want to be. Helping me to manage my money really helps with that."

After just a few months of personalised SeeAbility support, Tim has formed a plan for the future that is becoming clearer and more attainable every day.

More people are participating and contributing to society

Our support opens up new horizons to help people achieve things they never thought possible. Sara's story shows how we work closely with people we're supporting to define goals that matter to them, and then work out how we can help them to achieve those goals. For Sara, swimming in the sea was a dream come true.

Sara's story

Sara loves swimming. She's always loved swimming. So when the team in Guildford were talking to her and her family about what goals she wanted to work towards next, there was one thing that really stood out. Sara wanted to swim in the sea for the first time.

The Guildford team were determined to make the dream a reality, but wanted to make sure that the goal was broken down into manageable steps so Sara could enjoy the experience. Ben, manager in Guildford, explains:

“Sara explained to us that she didn’t want to swim in the sea in England but wanted to go to a warm country to experience the sea there. We’d never supported Sara to go abroad before, so we wanted her to experience a shorter plane journey before embarking on a much longer flight to the Mediterranean. Just a few hours is a long time to be on a flight if you don’t know what to expect and don’t want to be there.”

The team got in touch with Sara’s family in Scotland and supported her on a short trip to visit them. They carefully explained to her what would happen at each stage of the journey, both before and during the flight, so she was prepared for everything. As a result of this detailed planning, the trip was a success – not only was the flight a positive experience for Sara, she enjoyed visiting her family in Scotland for the first time in her life.

“That was a really positive experience in many ways,” says Ben. “We took everything we’d learnt from it and reflected to work out where we could do things differently and improve.”

A couple of months later, the team supported Sara to Majorca on a flight that lasted over two hours. Everything went smoothly. Sara was prepared for everything.

Finally, when they got there, Sara was able to swim in the sea.

“She loved it. That was a really great moment for her and for the team. For someone who has never really felt confident about going on holiday before, to be swimming in the sea for the first time in Majorca was really magical.”

“It all comes down to identifying what works for different people. It’s about being accountable to the people we support and what they want to achieve, and then giving them the support they need to achieve it in the best way possible. That’s why I love this job.”

Our values

We are brave

We are curious and fearless in trying new things.

The Tandem Club has been running for over 22 years, pairing up local sighted volunteers with people who have visual impairments. Based in Leatherhead, the club is a tight-knit group of friends who refuse to see barriers to what people with visual impairments can achieve.

For people we're supporting, the club is a great way to build lasting friendships, get active, and experience the joy of cycling.

"Thank you to all the tandem volunteers who will go out whatever the weather." Hannah Stuart, Volunteer Coordinator.

We are passionate

We work as a team to make a difference.

Our Eye Care Team won an award for Provision of the Year at the prestigious nasen awards for our work providing eye care to children in special schools. The award, shared with our school partners, recognises years of hard work, ensuring over 3,500 children have had their eyes tested since 2013.

In doing so, the team have proved to NHS England the need for sight tests in all special schools, and are now working closely with them to make this a reality nationwide.

"To know that we are now working with NHS England to roll out a national programme that reaches every child, is truly moving." Noopur Patel, Optometry Practice Manager.

We are creative

We create new ideas and find solutions.

Our teams across the charity have shown extraordinary commitment and creativity in facing the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. Whether that means utilising trained hairdressers in the team, carrying

out music therapy over video calls, bringing in personal gym equipment, or even, in some cases, voluntarily isolating themselves from family to protect people we support, everyone has gone the extra mile.

It has shown that, at SeeAbility, no challenge is too great for our support teams.

“We are so appreciative of the great care you are taking...and can’t thank you enough.” A family member.

We do what is right

We think, we act, we do the right thing!

The team at Heather House are world leaders in providing specialist support for people with life-limiting, rare conditions. Known primarily for their expertise in juvenile CLN3 (Batten) disease, their quality support reaches far beyond medicinal care to focus on helping people to live active and fulfilling lives.

Their dedication to everyone they support is truly inspiring – they stand by each person and their family from the moment they arrive at Heather House until their final moments.

“Nothing could compare to the level of care Rob and ourselves experienced during his last days with you.” Rob’s family

One team, one vision

At SeeAbility, we change lives. We always have and we always will. Working as one team with a common goal, our colleagues and volunteers share a unifying vision - of inclusive communities, where people with learning disabilities participate as equal citizens.

“Little did I know how much being involved with SeeAbility would change both our lives...”

The generosity and commitment of our volunteers helps people to live more independently and get out and about in their local communities. Their work is immensely valuable. Everyone who joins the team is

assigned a local volunteer coordinator who arranges a tailored training and induction programme. We carry out enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks on all our volunteers and mandatory safeguarding and training is provided within three months of starting, so everyone we support feels safe and comfortable with all the volunteers.

“We are truly lucky... I’m so proud to be a key worker. I am very lucky to be part of something truly unique.”

Throughout SeeAbility, no matter where they work within the organisation, colleagues consistently demonstrate that our values are at the heart of everything they do - and demonstrate them all, each and every day. Who we are, what we believe in, what we stand for – we encourage everyone to make the connection between the amazing work they do daily and our organisational strategy.

We work hard to create a culture where everyone feels valued, enthusiastic and proud of being part of the SeeAbility family. We offer a market leading benefits package with a learning and development programme that offers a personalised learning experience. Along with the people we support and their families, colleagues are encouraged to feel empowered to influence the future direction of the organisation.

The difference SeeAbility has made

- 720 team members who have delivered nearly 800,000 hours of care and support and other core programmes of work.
- 22% increase in agreement with the statement ‘I would recommend SeeAbility as a place to work’ (SeeAbility staff survey 2020).
- 185 active and dedicated volunteers giving 12,500 hours of their time.

Looking forward

At the time of publication we’re in the midst of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hard to speak of what ‘good’ might come out of this pandemic. Yet in the midst of all of the heartache and hardship, the

public, politicians and media have finally been exposed to what we all know – that social care and support is life changing, and it's done by people who are absolutely dedicated to the people they support.

Perhaps, as we look forward over the next year, we will see that recognition translating into reform. The priority must be ensuring that funding reaches the frontline workforce, but the inevitable recession and stresses on council budgets means we will be working hard to keep the profile of what social care has achieved, and can achieve for people's lives, high on the political agenda. We need to keep it visible so cuts are not so easy to make.

Most importantly, we hope that that drive will come directly from people with disabilities empowered by SeeAbility.

As they continue to develop their campaigning voices, our Associates Team will play an integral role in helping us influence the conversation. Over the coming months we'll continue seeking partnerships with others who can help us demonstrate the value of social care and the case for further investment.

Our 'Ready, Willing and Able' programme - with funding from The Peter Harrison Foundation and The Ingram Trust - aims to support people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss into paid employment. This will continue to gain momentum, building on what we have seen from 'lockdown' - that creative ways of working can really benefit people with disabilities.

Although the pandemic interrupted the delivery of our Every Day in Focus programme, funded by the National Lottery and Garfield Weston Foundation, our Eye Care Champions will be back recruiting Eye Care Aware Ambassadors as soon as possible. The team will help us promote equal access to eye care and help people with learning disabilities and autism make the most of the vision they have.

Support in numbers

- We have supported two people to become tenants in houses they can call their home.

- 77 inspiring people ran, cycled, walked and climbed mountains to raise an incredible £118,000.
- 30,831 generous gifts from our supporters.
- Nearly 7,500 people downloaded information from our website, including easy read eye care resources.
- 9 thoughtful people left gifts totalling over £260,000 in their wills.
- 12,000+ social media followers, a leap of 28%.
- 57 local authorities and NHS bodies are now commissioning us to deliver support to people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss.

Black lives matter

At SeeAbility, we have been angered by what has surfaced globally throughout the Black Lives Matter campaign. We have been reflecting on the issues that many Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people are facing. As an organisation, we're not perfect but we are striving to be better in all areas.

We are committed to listening and learning from others, both as individuals and as an organisation, in order to shape our journey and understand what this means for people with disabilities and our whole SeeAbility family.

Dedication

In memory of the people we supported, and our colleagues, who sadly lost their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Also in gratitude to our frontline colleagues for their sacrifices during this difficult time.

End of report.