

Susan Hoath - One Year In

I've been CEO at Vista for over a year now. It's been a busy year and I have tried to get out and about to meet people. Whether it's spending time with social groups, making coffee for hard working volunteers, raising awareness with the public, shadowing staff in the community or joining in with activities in our homes, I have loved every minute.



The Member Vista Forum has been working with me to build a much clearer picture of what it means to be a member of Vista – both in terms of what members get from us but also what members can offer us – and I'd love to hear from anyone who has particular ideas or suggestions for this.

This year was also one of significant effort trying to get our long talked-about project to develop the site on Hinkley Road, Leicester Forest East back up and running. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the consultation. Vista's new home will be one of the first of its kind; bringing together lots of different services for people affected by sight loss under one roof.

It's also been a busy year for our Board, we have recruited and I am delighted to be welcoming and working with Pauline and all our trustees to review the charity and plan for our future.

We're pleased to announce we have a new Chair of Trustees and three new Trustees

Last month we recruited four new members to our Board. We're very proud of our Board of Trustees, who are responsible for directing the affairs of the charity and ensure that we meet the needs of the people we support.

Pauline Tagg – Chair of Trustees

Pauline Tagg MBE has been Chair of East Midlands Ambulance Trust since 2013. Pauline has worked in the acute sector of the NHS for over 35 years as a nurse, midwife and senior manager, bringing a wealth of experience leading and working with executive and board teams in developing values, vision and strategy. She is committed to continuous improvement and development not only in services but also in the way boards operate and lead organisations.



Rob Hogan - Trustee

Rob Hogan, an optometrist, had a career of 38 years working in academia, his own practice, hospitals and large corporate organisations. He has extensive experience from being on a broad range of boards, committees, councils, special advisory groups and has been an influential driver of several working parties to create new policies and professional standards. Living in Leicestershire for over 25 years and now semi-retired, Rob is keen to bring his experience and influence in his sector to enable Vista's voice and reach to grow in size and effectiveness.



Jean Voller - Trustee

Jean is a highly experienced (recently retired) head orthoptist, with over 43 years' experience. Having worked at St James University Hospital in Leeds and Leicester Royal Infirmary, in her vast career she has created new services and introduced new technology to improve the standard of patient care. Jean has published many articles in her field of expertise and is well known in the sight loss community and committed to the continuing development of orthoptics to improve patient care. Since recently retiring she has thrown herself into many volunteering opportunities with Vista and is already spending time with key people to understand our services better.



Maddy Kennedy - Trustee

Maddy is a highly experienced finance professional, who has worked in finance roles for a variety of commercial companies before setting up her own business. Maddy lives in Barwell near Leicester and is keen to spend more time locally, to create more of a balance of community support alongside her professional career.



Susan Hoath, Chief Executive of Vista said: "We're delighted to have Pauline, Jean, Rob and Maddy join our Board of Trustees and are excited about the wealth of experience and new perspective they will bring to Vista and the difference we can continue to make to the lives of people with sight loss."

CQC rates 'Applegarth Outstanding'

Earlier this year, staff and residents at the Applegarth home, the leadership team and Trustee Paul Ryb gathered together to celebrate Applegarth's fantastic 'Outstanding' rating following their recent CQC inspection and the home's 30th Birthday.



Emma said: "It was great to spend the afternoon with so many members of staff and residents from the home. Over the past 30 years, I've had the delight of getting to know them all. We remain committed to providing the highest quality of care for adults affected by visual impairment and learning disabilities." Vista's Applegarth residential home, provide dedicated person - centred care for those with complex needs. Each resident is encouraged to make decision for themselves to maintain as much control over their life as possible.

If you want to know more about our Applegarth home, please call us on **0116 249 8839**.

Richard at Applegarth home

Richard, a resident at Applegarth has been living at the home since it first opened its doors as a care home back in 1989. He was 52 years old when he moved in and prior to living at Applegarth he had lived most of his adult life in institutionalised living.

When he moved into the home, he was very much able to tell the staff what he wanted out of life and when/how he wanted to do it. He helped set up his own support plans and chose activities that he wanted to do day by day.

Over the years he has enjoyed helping out on a farm, cookery classes at colleges, grown his own vegetables, painted his own bedroom and adopted a cat he called "Garthy" who lived at the home with him.

He goes on holiday up to twice a year. His favourite places are going to Blackpool, barge holidays and staying over at a farm in Melton Mowbray where he can sit and stroke animals and be around that culture, this is something very dear to Richard as he grew up on a farm and spent many of his days riding on a tractor with his father as a small boy. Richard shows no signs of slowing down and although he has developed many health conditions, he is a true example of someone who has been cared for so well and very much still living his best life.

If you want to know more about our care homes, please call us on **0116 249 8839**.

Case Study - Betty

Betty has been a resident at our New Wycliffe Home since April 2018. She has no sight in her right eye and she has just had a cataracts operation on her left eye.



The New Wycliffe Home has had a huge impact on Betty and she enjoys getting involved in wide range of activities. Betty said: "I'm very happy to be living at New Wycliffe and I have met a lot of nice people here."

If you would like more information contact New Wycliffe Home on **0116 266 7093**.

Early Years Programme "Sees" Success...

After securing funding for a further two years our Early Years Programme continues to see success. Our programme is designed to teach practitioners in Early Years settings to observe and identify possible signs of sight loss problems with young children through play and the use of our interactive resource pack.



Oksana, Early Years Project Manager, has received some fantastic feedback which shows how the programme is making a difference and proving to be a success. Following a recent training session, one practitioner who attended said: "I would just like to say thank you as it has already helped me support a child who has Nystagmus in my setting and today a 23 month old was also diagnosed severely short-sighted with a minus 8 prescription due to me pushing for them to see an optician due to concerns I already had." In addition, "Coming on the course gave me the confidence to know what I was observing and the knowledge on where to direct the family. Initially, the health visitor had advised to wait until they start school, which I knew in my heart was not the right thing to do."

This is what our programme is all about, these excellent outcomes mean the children in question will get the right support they need, following training from a simple programme. Having the correct support put in place helps these young children get the best start in life.

If you would like to know more about the project please contact Oksana, at oksana@vistablind.org.uk.

Member Forum news

The Member Vista Forum is a user led group for people in the local area with a visual impairment.

Meeting each quarter, at the Vista office, with the Chief Executive and other representatives from Vista, the forum is open to adults registered with Vista. It is a good place to make your voice heard and share information and experiences with other people living with sight loss.

Our forum is currently looking for a new Chair and Vice Chair, if you are interested in these roles or would like to join the forum please contact us on **0116 249 8839**.

2020: The Year of our Vision

Vista is the largest local sight loss charity in the UK, but it can be difficult for people to get to know us, find us and access us. In 2020 Vista needs to change, to give more people affected by sight loss the vital support they need and the support community they tell us they want.

Vista wants to build a centre for sight loss in Leicester Forest East, on the Hinckley Road site which has been home to many of the people we support for over 50 years. Following our consultation with members last year plans are well underway, and we are working with an architect to design our new building.

Vista's new home will be a place to get help and support, make friends, try new things, socialise and live.

We are excited about our vision for the future and look forward to sharing more information with you in the coming months.

Fundraising news

Hello there! Some of you may have already met me but for those of you who haven't please let me introduce myself.

My name is Lisa Harrison-Byrne and I'm covering for Becky Poole as Fundraising

and Partnerships Manager whilst she is on maternity leave. We also have two new team members, Amanda and Paul. Amanda will be working with local businesses and Paul will be organising fun and challenging events, all with the aim of raising much needed funds to continue the fabulous work of Vista. Of course, not forgetting our Sam who continues to work hard securing funds through trusts and grants.



Last month, Vista's Chief Executive Susan Hoath launched our super Spring Raffle with a first prize of £1000 being drawn at the end of March. If everyone receiving Newsline sold one book of 5 raffle tickets, we would raise an amazing £15,000. Please help!

Tickets are available from **Manisha** at **head office**, available on **0116 249 8801**. They're also available from Vista shops.

We have an extensive range of exciting events planned throughout the Spring and Summer of 2020, which include the Vista Pub Quiz, Easter Egg Hunts, Snowdon Challenge, Vista Parachute Display Team and Leicester Sunrise 5K. Calling all willing volunteers!

If you, any of your family or friends can help in any way, contact me at **lisa.harrison-byrne@vistablind.org.uk** or call on **07715078744**.