



Blind Foundation

Year in Review 2016



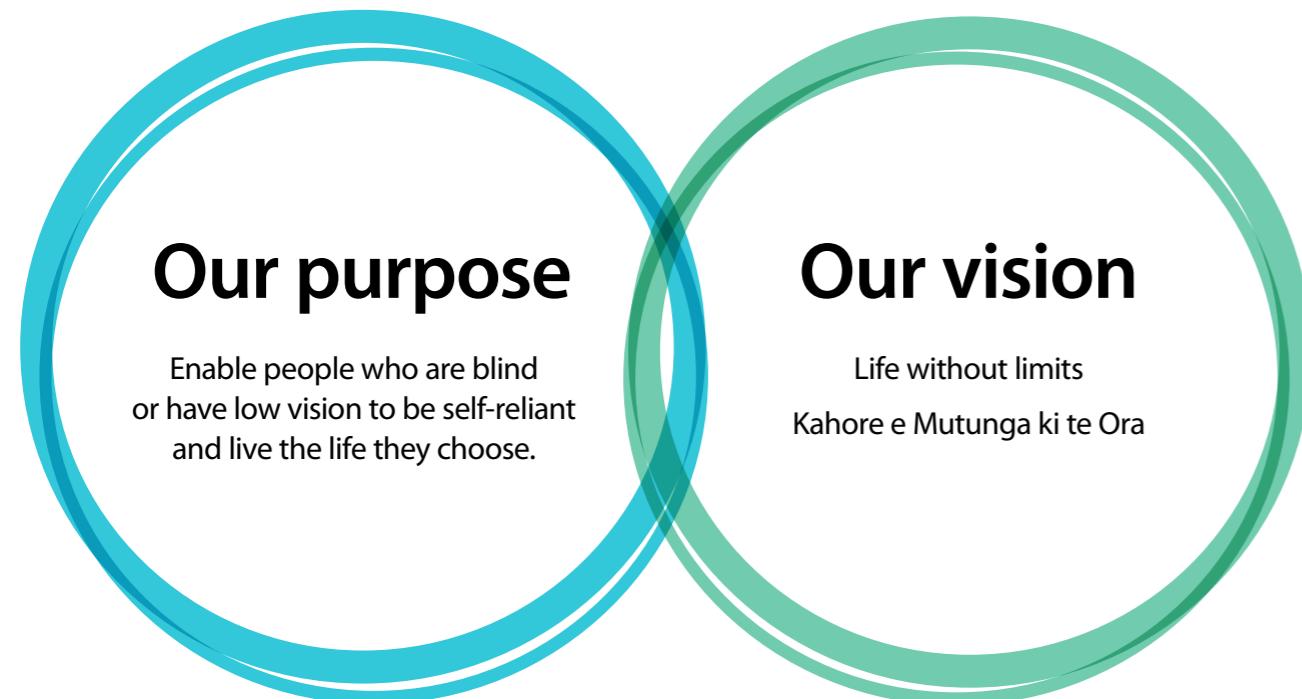
Blind Foundation client June Hieatt working on a painting.

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Sapphire Laser offset – PEFC Certified - PROGRAMME FOR THE ENDORSEMENT OF FOREST CERTIFICATION – promoting sustainable forest management through independent third party forest certification.

Our new purpose, vision and values were launched early in 2015 and are part of a new Strategic Plan which will guide the Blind Foundation through to 2020.



Our values

Optimistic

We promote optimism and hope, and positively address challenges through being solutions focused. We encourage enthusiasm and energy for our cause. We support one another and practise positive approaches that build resilience and strength for times of adversity.

Connecting

We are inclusive and transparent, and communicate openly. We practise great team work, working together for the greater good. We build collaborative relationships, develop partnerships and connect across boundaries, enabling us to better achieve our vision and goals.

Aspirational

We constantly strive for improvement, and actively look to learn from what we do. We challenge ourselves, we are agile, flexible and open to change. We are responsive to innovations that improve the organisation and make things better for clients.

Empowering

We empower people, and enable self-reliance and fulfilment. We listen, and treat others with care and respect. We value diversity and are responsive to each person's unique needs. We demonstrate accountability and integrity in our work.

A message from the Chair

It has been another busy and successful year for the Board, filled with important projects and milestones.

Work is under way on a Youth Engagement Strategy to better include our younger people in the organisation. If they are to lead our organisation in the future, it is important that the door is open for them to get involved.

After several years of work behind the scenes, Parliament has repealed the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind (RNZFB) Act 2002. The Minister for Disability Issues Hon Nicky Wagner agreed to sponsor a Private Member's Repeal Bill on the now-redundant Act. Passing the 2002 Act allowed our voting members to elect the Board, rather than Parliament. This was a key moment in the RNZFB's history. In 2012, when we registered as an incorporated society, the Act became redundant. The repeal of the Act is another step towards self-determination and our independent future.

To ensure that we are delivering on our strategic priority to build a foundation for the future, a review of the RNZFB constitution is under way. The current constitution was developed based on attitudes and laws from the 1990s and needs to be updated to ensure that it meets the needs of tomorrow's membership. The review is looking at such things as our primary purpose or objectives, member participation, attracting and engaging with clients, our voting system and ensuring that the Board is able to account to the members.

For the first time in 2015, the Board introduced dictation voting for the Board elections. It was great to see people use the new option and we will continue to look at ways to streamline this easy-to-use process.

The Board was pleased to be able to contribute to the Helen Keller collection being digitised. A financial gift from us meant the American Foundation for the Blind met its fundraising target of US\$25,000 and the National Endowment for the Humanities matched the sum. The project was able to go ahead, making this invaluable historical resource more widely available.

The Board would like to congratulate Lance Girling-Butcher, Genevieve McLachlan and Franceska Banga, who received Queen's Birthday Honours. Lance was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to the blind and seniors, Genevieve was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to people with disabilities and Franceska, a former Board Director, was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to business and the community.

In finishing, I'd like to say a heart-felt thank-you to our many supporters who have helped us continue to offer life-changing services this year. You have made a real difference to Kiwis in the blindness community.

Rick Hoskin
Board Chair

Chief Executive's report

In the first year of our new strategic plan, we made great progress towards achieving the key priorities that will help people who are blind or have low vision live a life without limits.

It's with thanks I note the generosity of Kiwis, which has allowed us to end the year with a surplus.

In the strategic priority of Independent Living, the formation of a new team brings together social, recreational and volunteer disciplines. The new Community Volunteer and Recreation (CVR) team aims to offer life enrichment opportunities. The redevelopment of the Blind Foundation's employment service was another highlight in this priority. The service now provides a more targeted approach to assisting more blind and low vision Kiwis into employment.

A particular area of focus this year has been moving towards an accessible New Zealand, through the priority of Access for All. Completing research to uncover the prevalence of blindness and low vision in New Zealand was a highlight, and will help form the basis of much of our future advocacy work. We were also pleased to host a forum discussing the importance of accessibility, which showcased research from us and others, and was attended by a wide range of organisations.

This year also saw the Blind Foundation advocate for New Zealand to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty, which aims to make it easier for people to access, distribute and share a wider range of copyrighted works in accessible formats. The overwhelmingly positive response to the Treaty from blind and low vision Kiwis allowed us to make a strong submission to the government.

On a practical level, the Blind Foundation supported accessibility through launching our new website of which a key benefit is easier navigation and search, and continuing to develop our Blind Foundation library app, BookLink, and Telephone Information Service.

In focusing on Reaching More People, the Blind Foundation continued with targeted and widespread approaches to create greater awareness of blindness. We are also working towards understanding how we can best meet the needs of potential clients so more Kiwis get help when needed.

And finally, the priority of Building a Foundation for the Future, saw a positive financial result for the Blind Foundation, while investing in our people and assets.

Overall, the Blind Foundation has made great strides towards all priorities of the new strategic plan, and I am pleased to share some highlights throughout this Year in Review.

To close, I would like to thank all of you in the Blind Foundation community for your dedication and support during the past year. Your contributions make a huge difference to New Zealanders who are blind or have low vision. Thank you.

Sandra Budd

Sandra Budd
Chief Executive

Chair's Award winner

Julie Woods' determination to live a life without limits and help others do the same saw her receive the 2015 Chair's Award.

"I couldn't have imagined when I went blind, that one day I would receive such an award," she says.

"It is an honour to be recognised by your peers. I always say the best thing about being blind is other blind people. There's nothing like watching other blind people do the things you think you can't do, to make you realise that you can."

Blind Foundation Board Chair Rick Hoskin presented the award to Julie at the Blind Foundation's Annual General Meeting on 7 November.

"Through several initiatives, Julie uses her experiences to show others in the blindness community not to focus on the vision they've lost, but what they can gain, breaking through all stereotypes and barriers," says Rick.

"When people in her local Dunedin community started asking her questions about what it was like to be blind, she created a persona – 'that blind woman' – to help address her sight loss upfront. She wants to make people feel more comfortable when talking about blindness issues.

That blind woman has become a local and national heroine to everyone she comes in touch with."

Julie was declared blind in 1997. She quickly learned a range of adaptive living skills and adaptive technology, as well as ways to take care of her two sons.

"As a Blind Foundation Ambassador, Julie shows true spirit in everything she does and helps to normalise blindness in society, which she does with humour, panache and her never-ending upbeat energy," says Rick.

In addition to her many projects, since she went blind Julie has completed eight Dunedin half-marathons and eight Papatowai Challenges. She also loves to travel and inspires others to travel, through her blog 7 Wonders of the World.



Julie Woods receiving the Chair's Award from Board Chair Rick Hoskin.

Meet the Board

The Blind Foundation's Board is elected by our voting members. The Board's role focuses on the wider issues of organisational purpose, including setting and monitoring the strategic direction and long-term sustainability.

Richard Hoskin, Chair

Rick was re-elected to the Blind Foundation's Board of Directors in 2015, after initially stepping onto the Board in 2009. In November 2011, he was elected as Chair.

Rick is the former owner and director of PhysioACTION, a physiotherapy practice that employed more than 25 staff in clinics throughout Auckland.

In his earlier days, Rick worked at the Blind Foundation's Adult Rehabilitation Unit and previously on the switchboard. Rick has been a client since he was 17 years old. He is a director of Foundation Properties Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the RNZFB; a trustee on the Bledisloe Estate and Bledisloe Royston Trusts; and a member of the Institute of Directors.

Keith Appleton

Keith was first elected in November 2010. He is a Tauranga-based chartered accountant in public practice and has a keen interest in education. Keith has held executive positions on the Board of Trustees of two schools. He holds several company directorships. Keith has served on the Advisory Board of the Counties Manukau Plunket branch and ME/CFS Support (Auckland). He is a member of the Institute of Directors and of Governance New Zealand. Keith's adult daughter has had low vision since birth.

Julie Bartlett MNZM

Julie was appointed to the Blind Foundation Board in 2014. She has worked for more than 20 charitable organisations, including the Alzheimers Foundation, Autism NZ, West Auckland Hospice and the Multiple Sclerosis

Society in a variety of roles ranging from volunteer to fundraising manager. In 2002, Julie founded and led StarJam, dedicated to empowering young people with disabilities through performance. Early in 2016, Julie launched Sources Of Unconditional Love (SOUL), which empowers girls, especially those who suffer from prejudice and discrimination.

Julie was named NEXT Woman of the Year 2012 and appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2013. Julie is a member of the Institute of Directors and Governance NZ.

Peter Hoskin

Peter joined the Board for the first time in November 2012 and was re-elected in 2015. He has been a member of the Blind Foundation since he was nine years old. He studied law at Auckland University, then worked at Russell McVeagh, an Auckland firm of solicitors, before setting up his own practice. After 27 years in one career, it was time for a change, so Peter sold his practice and today manages an investment portfolio. He also plays and writes music and helps raise two teenage sons. Peter is a member of the Institute of Directors.

Chung-Pin (CP) Lin*

Chung-Pin joined the Board in November 2013. CP is originally from Taiwan. He immigrated to New Zealand with his parents in 1984. He graduated with a BSc in mathematics from Canterbury University and later studied law, French and German at Otago University. He went on to take a postgraduate diploma in wine science, covering both viticulture and oenology at Lincoln University, and then



The Blind Foundation Board from left: Keith Appleton, Julie Bartlett, Judy Small, Peter Hoskin, Rick Hoskin, Paul Sullivan, Carolyn Weston, CP Lin and Nicola Owen.

set up his own wine exporting company. More recently, he has worked internationally as a consultant winemaker. CP has been a client of the Blind Foundation since 2006.

Nicola Owen

Nicola joined the Board in 2014. She is one of the first trained audio describers in New Zealand, and, along with her blind partner, she runs Audio Described Aotearoa to provide audio description services and training across New Zealand. She is a qualified rehabilitation worker with experience in teaching sighted guiding skills and producing accessible documents, including braille. Prior to establishing her company, she was the development manager of Auckland Disability Law and spent six months on secondment at the Human Rights Commission. Nicola has extensive New Zealand and UK experience in disability rights and advocacy, including helping to write the first UNCRPD Auckland Shadow report. She is also an associate member of Blind Citizens New Zealand.

Judy Small

Judy joined the Board in November 2013. She has been a client of the Blind Foundation since she was four years old. Judy graduated in 1999 with a Masters of Social Science (Hons). Her thesis was a sociological study of blind people and how they identify themselves. She worked as a policy analyst in social policy for more than

11 years in the Office for Disability Issues and has also served on the Blind Citizens New Zealand National Executive. Judy is currently employed as a disability advisor to the Hamilton City Council.

Paul Sullivan

Paul was re-elected as a director by Blind Foundation Associate Members in 2013, after initially joining the Board in 2010. He is a management consultant with advisory firm Cornwall Strategic and has a varied background in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Paul is a member of the Institute of Directors, with more than 10 years of experience on boards, and is currently a director of several organisations.

Carolyn Weston

Carolyn was re-elected to the Board in 2015 after being welcomed back to the Board in November 2012, having previously served from 1992 to 1998. Carolyn is a client of the Blind Foundation who studied and worked in early childhood education. She has more than 20 years' experience working in governance, serving on various boards of trustees and committees. Carolyn is passionate about Blind Foundation clients' needs and access to services. She is also a member of Blind Citizens New Zealand and Kāpo Māori Aotearoa/ NZ Inc.

* Chung-Pin Lin stepped down from the RNZFB Board on 30 May 2016. His position on the Board has been taken by Pam MacNeill, who received the next highest amount of votes in the November 2015 Board election, with effect from July 2016.

Our clients

Total clients: 12,272

New people registered between
1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016: 1,392

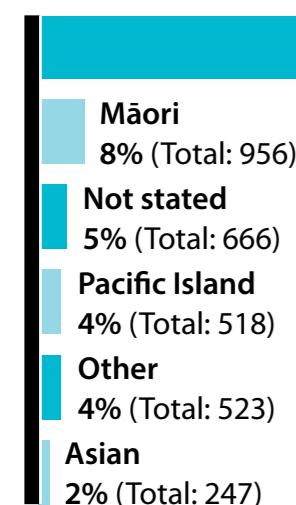


Female
59% (Total: 7,229)

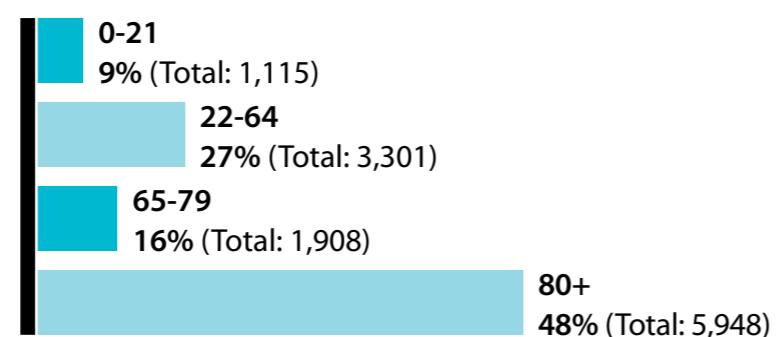


Male
41% (Total: 5,043)

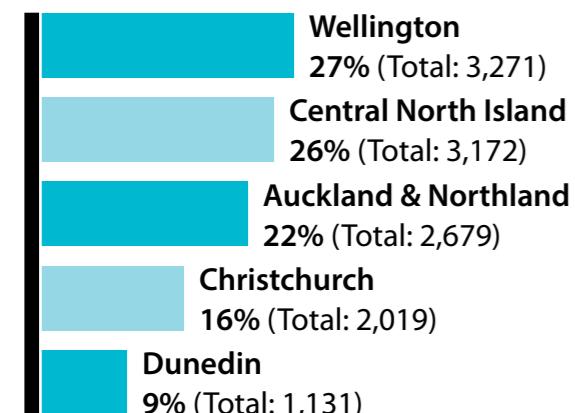
Ethnicity



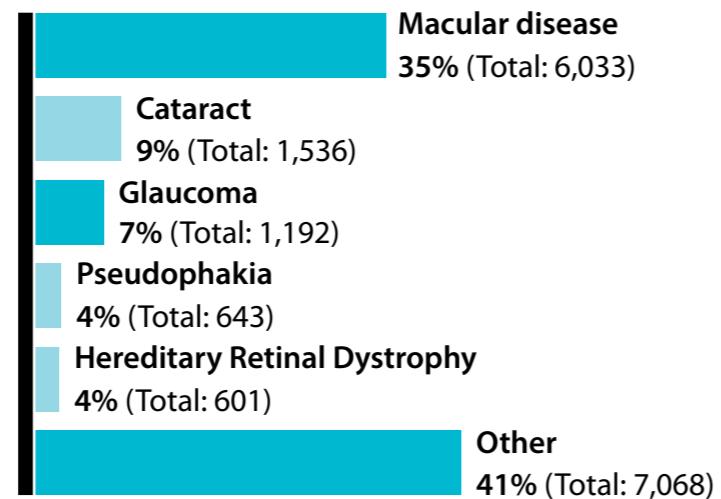
Age



Office region



Eye conditions*



* Total number of eye conditions noted is more than the total number of people as some present with multiple conditions.

At a glance

Direct client services

5,065

sessions held with clients
accessing rehabilitation services

1,472

people accessed adaptive
technology services

1,149

clients, and their families,
received counselling services

584

people received
vocational services



Access to information

586,525

library items circulated to people across
the country

219,826

pages of accessibly formatted
documents delivered

27,382

hours of information listened to on
the Telephone Information Service



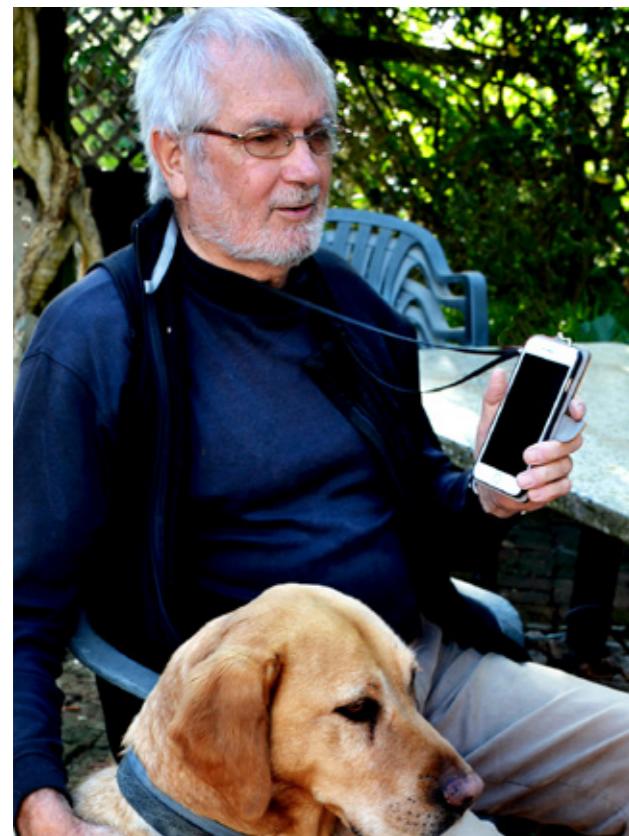
Access for all

This year the Blind Foundation has continued to stride ahead with advancements to reach people through technology.

March saw the launch of our new website, which was redeveloped to make it easier for visitors to find the information they need.

Deb Ward, Executive Director Culture, Engagement and Improvement, says the previous site was good when it was launched, but was no longer fit for purpose.

"It had become very unwieldy and didn't meet the needs of today's visitors. We decided to start



Lance Girling-Butcher using BookLink.

again, so we could take a fresh look at how to create a really good user experience."

The Blind Foundation went to key audiences – clients, volunteers and donors – to find out what they wanted to see on the site. As the new site developed, we conducted sessions with blind and low vision users to test it for usability and accessibility.

"We've had good feedback that the site is easier to use and find your way around, which is great to hear," says Deb.

Developments in BookLink app, used by library members to download reading materials, have created a far superior reading experience. The app has been upgraded, with all NZME newspapers, including the New Zealand Herald, added to the catalogue, alongside 11,000 audio books.

Audio magazines are also now available, including titles like Time, New Zealand Women's Weekly, Consumer NZ, and North & South.

BookLink's accessibility functions have been vastly improved, and readers can now browse categories in the advanced search function.

In our aim to provide more information through a range of technologies, we have added more than 100 newspaper and magazine titles to the Telephone Information Service (TIS).

We have also been continuing to support and develop all the other content that reaches TIS and ensuring that it is relevant to our clients.

In the community

This year, the establishment of a new team has resulted in more opportunities for blind and low vision people nationwide. The Community, Volunteer and Recreation (CVR) team offers more life enrichment activities and community connections. It also aims to develop a volunteer workforce to help achieve those goals.

While the Blind Foundation has a proud history of social activities and volunteers, this new team has a more holistic approach. Their work will bring greater benefit to people in the blindness community.

"We're reaching more people by engaging with them directly and using their feedback to set our direction. We're listening and we're putting their ideas into action," says Blair Gilbert, National Manager of the CVR team. "Already there are a whole lot of new activities happening around the country."

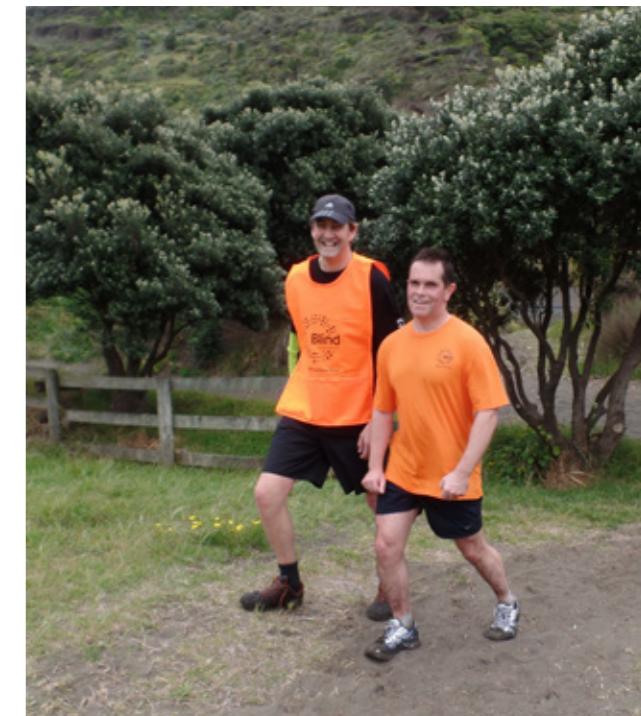
We have increased the number of existing activities like book groups and coffee groups. New offerings include West Coast swing dancing, horse riding and a new sport called blind frisbee golf.

In response to feedback, CVR has also established a peer mentoring programme. It is being piloted in Christchurch, with the intention of it being rolled out across the country. Mentors have been trained to help others living with sight loss and will be matched to mentees.

This year CVR built on the Blind Foundation's offerings for young people to develop their leadership skills by delivering the inaugural Youth SEED. A group of young people took

part in the programme, which involved self-awareness, team-building and leadership exercises.

The CVR team has also increased the number of people volunteering with the Blind Foundation from around 1,500 to more than 1,700. This has enabled us to offer more support for clients to live a life without limits.



Blair Gilbert and Mike Lloyd at the Battle of the Sands.



Neil Jarvis with refreshable braille display.

Affordable braille

The Blind Foundation has been a key contributor in an international project to create an affordable refreshable braille display that launched this year.

The display was developed by a worldwide consortium of organisations, including the Blind Foundation, called the Transforming Braille Group. The aim of the Group was to make low-cost refreshable braille displays accessible to more people.

The resulting Orbit Reader 20 launched at the 31st Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference in California, in March.

Refreshable displays work by electronically raising and lowering pins to produce a display of electronic information in braille, rather than using another device like an audio player.

Neil Jarvis, Blind Foundation Executive Director Strategic Relations and Accessibility, says, "We've had electronic braille devices for years, but the problem is that they're extraordinarily expensive."

The new display will give people greater access to computers and mobile devices.

Neil says it is also great for reading electronic books, takes flash cards and has USB and Bluetooth capabilities.

"Rather than carry a book in seven or eight volumes, which is not uncommon for a novel in braille, you might be able to carry around thousands of books on a single flash card."

He demonstrated the capabilities of the prototype refreshable braille display for blind and low vision Kiwis earlier this year.

Blind Foundation client Martine Abel, who attended the demonstration, says the development is exciting.

"It's been a long time coming and it will give people more options."

The device is expected to retail for US\$500 (approximately NZ\$755) or less, which is much more affordable than the displays currently available.

Flag and money

How do you make a flag referendum accessible to the blindness community? How do you make sure that banknotes are more user-friendly for those with low vision?

The Blind Foundation was involved in answering these challenges this year.

The flag referendums were a great opportunity for people who are blind or have low vision to help choose the nation's flag.

The Electoral Commission and the Flag Consideration Panel sought the Blind Foundation's input early in the process. They commissioned our Accessible Formats Service (AFS) team to create official descriptions for the long list of flags and produce braille and tactile versions of the final five alternative designs.



New bank notes.

The team also created accessible versions of the leaflets and documents related to the referendum process. They ensured the official website was accessible too.

"Our tactile diagrams gave the blind community the chance to obtain the same information that a sighted person would get from a visual image," says AFS Manager Phil Turner.

The diagrams have been archived in the Blind Foundation's library as an important piece of national history.

We had the chance to work with the Government again on the new banknotes.

Blind Foundation Access and Awareness Advisor Chris Orr says the Reserve Bank of New Zealand sought advice on making the new notes more accessible to the blindness community.

"They asked us what we would like to see on the notes. We advocated for bigger numbers and brighter colours, which we got. We went through a number of meetings with them and they brought in sample notes."

Chris says the brighter hues produce a better contrast and make it easier for people with low vision to differentiate between the notes. The feedback on the new notes has been positive.

Steve Gordon, Reserve Bank Head of Currency, Property and Security, says the Reserve Bank was grateful for the Blind Foundation's assistance and advice.

"Feedback from a range of stakeholders, including the Blind Foundation, was invaluable throughout the design process. The new notes incorporate improved design features to help blind and low vision people handle currency with confidence – including larger, bolder numerals, greater colour contrast between notes and clearer backgrounds. The Reserve Bank looks forward to maintaining a close relationship with the Blind Foundation to support continued collaboration on all currency-related products."

Honours in the community

New Year and Queen's Birthday Honours

Blind Foundation client and former staff member Genevieve McLachlan was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to people with disabilities.

Genevieve worked as an adaptive communications instructor at the Blind Foundation for nearly seven years. She then started her own consultancy service, Adaptive Technology Solutions.

She was also a guide dog handler consultant for the Blind Foundation and is a past treasurer of the Guide Dog Alliance Inc.

Currently, Genevieve is a trustee of SailAbility Wellington and a Be. Accessible Coach.

She says the honour is also a tribute to her husband Bruce. "He is very supportive in everything I'm involved with and transports me to and from appointments where necessary, as well as helping run our business."

Fellow Blind Foundation client Lance Girling-Butcher was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to the blind and seniors.

Lance is a former newspaper editor and journalist. He was also a New Plymouth District Councillor, chairing the Disabilities Issues and Let's Go working parties.

He is currently the Chair of the New Plymouth Positive Ageing Trust and a board member of Kapo Māori Aotearoa New Zealand.

Lance says he can't take all the credit, as his wife is a major part of what he achieves.

"She has to play a more active role than a lot of people's wives do in getting me around and dressed and looking good, and she actually joined some of the committees that I'm on. We've worked together closely all our lives."

The honour extends to his guide dog Yogi, who he says faithfully escorts him wherever he needs.

"I'm really grateful to the Blind Foundation for giving me the skills and equipment I need."

Former Blind Foundation Board Director Franceska Banga was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to business and the community.

Franceska, an internationally recognised venture capital investment specialist, assisted in the Blind Foundation's transition to the stand-alone trust during her time on the Board.



Genevieve McLachlan.

International appointments

Guide Dogs National Manager Paul Metcalf has been voted Chair of the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF). Paul was re-elected to the board for a second four year term at the IGDF's 2016 AGM.

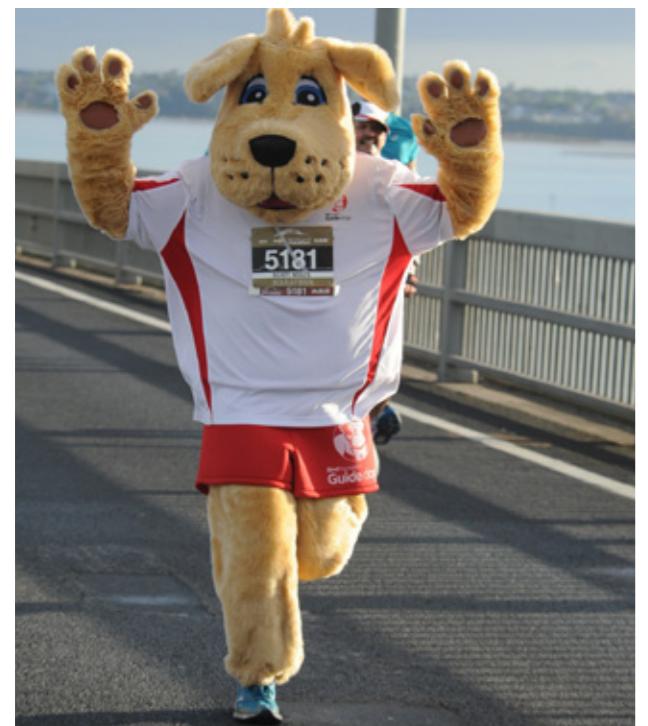
The outcome is a great personal achievement for Paul and reflects the high regard that Blind Foundation Guide Dogs enjoys on the international stage.

Thank you to our supporters

Every year thousands of individuals and organisations across the country donate their time and money to help provide essential support for Kiwis who are blind or have low vision. We are extremely grateful for their support – we simply couldn't do it without our generous and caring supporters.

Donating

Many of the services that support people in the community who live with sight loss receive no government funding, so we rely heavily on the generosity of the public. Whether it's counselling someone who has lost their sight, breeding and training guide dogs, providing special workplace training and support for someone who is blind or has low vision – all of this is possible thanks to our donors. Every donation makes a big difference, so thank you to everyone who has supported us in this way.



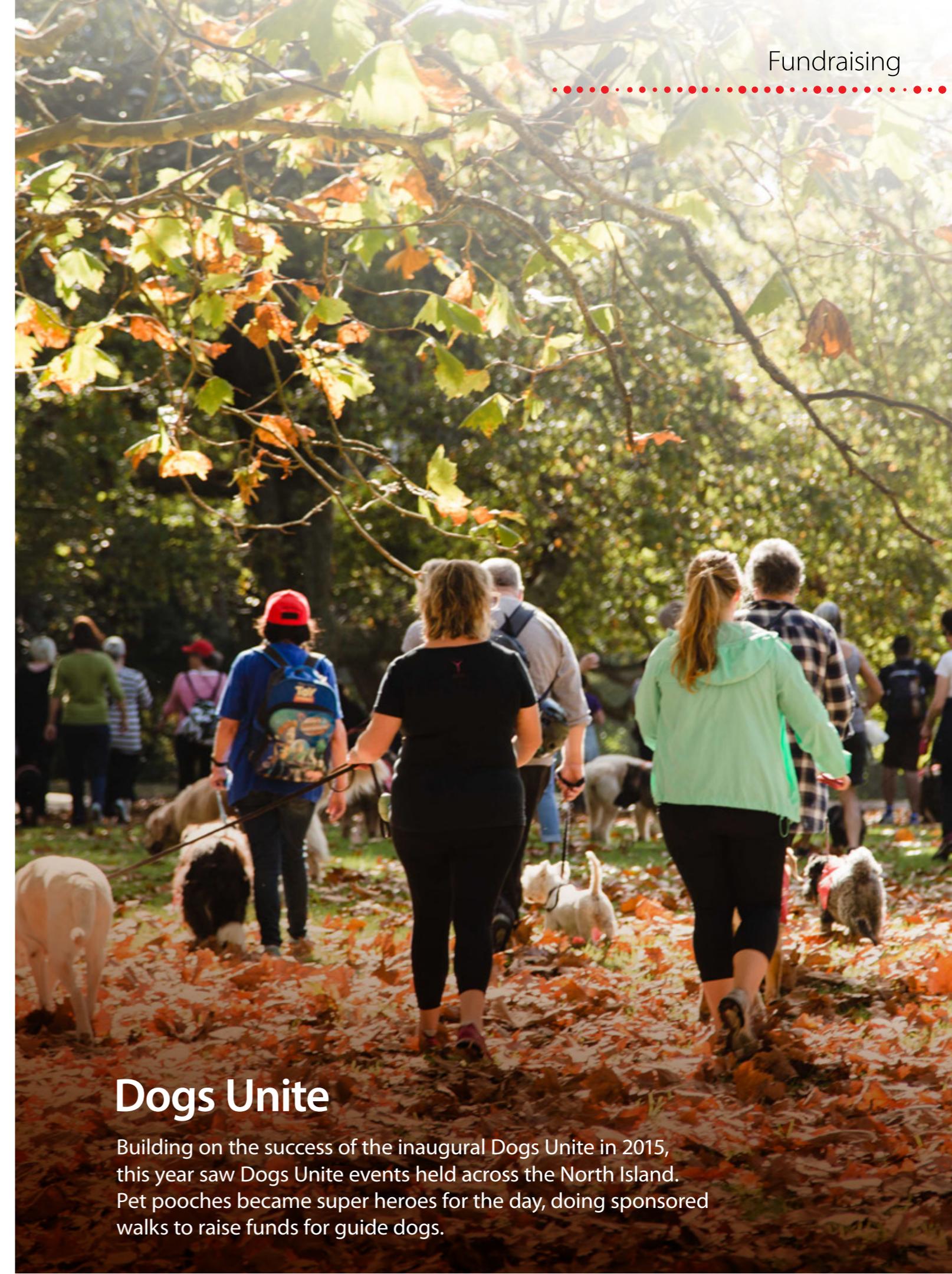
Marvel goes the distance to raise vital funds.



Frank Bennett and Lisa Reid collecting for Blind Week.

Fundraising

Every year thousands of New Zealanders support the Blind Foundation by fundraising in their community. From coordinating a street collection to running a marathon or baking puppy-shaped bikkies, we are so grateful for the support of our fundraising volunteers who help raise awareness and money for people who are blind or have low vision in their communities.



Dogs Unite

Building on the success of the inaugural Dogs Unite in 2015, this year saw Dogs Unite events held across the North Island. Pet pooches became super heroes for the day, doing sponsored walks to raise funds for guide dogs.

Red Puppy Sponsors

Red Puppy Sponsorship was first launched in 2007 to support the breeding and training of guide dogs. It has grown from a handful of supporters to thousands of loyal Red Puppy Sponsors throughout New Zealand. We are so grateful to every person who donates monthly to support these amazing puppies and the many other essential services that help Kiwis who are blind or have low vision live life without limits.

Every Red Puppy Sponsor receives a framed photo of the current pupstar, whose training progress we follow throughout the year. Pupstar Norah started her training in May 2016.



Bringing Books to Life

Every year many generous New Zealanders support the Blind Foundation library, and this year was no exception. Thousands of people responded to our appeal to support the production of books for our youth library. Every month the library receives hundreds of requests from young people who are hungry for books they can read.

With only 5% of printed material accessible for people who are blind or have low vision, the Blind Foundation library provides an essential service for New Zealanders, regardless of their age.

The importance of the library can't be underestimated. Sam, pictured below, always looks forward to his new reading material. His Mum says "Without the Blind Foundation we just wouldn't have those books – that makes such a difference to Sam."

Elizabeth told us Sam feels excited about getting books he can read easily, "he says, I can't wait until those books come."

Elizabeth says "most books for children Sam's age are only available in the smaller print size. A lot of the large print books available in libraries are for adults and much younger

children. I worry he may not end up reading very much if we rely on what is available in public libraries."

"My grandfather was also a member of the Blind Foundation library. He went blind towards the end of his life and described it as being in this blackness all the time and being alone in the blackness. It changed his life when the Blind Foundation sent him talking books. The service the Blind Foundation has provided our family is absolutely invaluable."

Whether you're giving monthly to support the library or made a single donation in response to our appeal – thank you. Your support enables us to continue to bring alive the magic of books, and provide new information to children and adults alike.



Eight-year-old Sam reads a book from the Blind Foundation Youth Library.

A special thanks to our major supporters

We would like to thank all of our major supporters whose gifts help provide essential services to people who are blind or have low vision. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the following:



Transforming Lives™

Proudly feeding the Blind Foundation Guide Dog puppies

- ACG Education Foundation
- Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at of New Zealand
- Air New Zealand National Cargo
- Alice & Stan Flavell Charitable Trust
- Auckland Council
- Auckland Council - Dog Registrations
- Beatrice Georgeson Trust
- BlueSky Community Trust Ltd
- Brian & Rose Dakin
- Christchurch City Council
- Community Trust of Southland
- Craig Griffin & Lord
- David Levene Foundation
- Dorothy Cutts
- Eastern & Central Community Trust
- Eric & Beverley Wright
- Estate of George Sevicke Jones
- First Sovereign Trust Ltd
- Four Winds Foundation Limited
- Freemasons New Zealand
- Gordon Roberts Charitable Trust
- Grumitt Sisters Charitable Trust
- Hilda Bottomley Charitable Trust
- Hill's Pet Nutrition (NZ) Ltd
- Hudson Gavin Martin
- Hugh Anderson Charitable Trust
- Hugh Green Foundation
- Hutt Mana Charitable Trust
- Hyundai New Zealand
- In Memory of Ian Pain
- In Memory of Lewis Vercoe Westlake
- In Memory of Margaret May Bird
- In Memory of Robin Silver
- Infinity Foundation Limited
- J B W McKenzie Charitable Trust
- J N Williams Memorial Trust / H B Williams Turanga Trust

- Jack and Netta Shortt Memorial Trust
- JDS Roberts Charitable Trust
- Jones Foundation
- Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust
- Judy Myers
- Kelliher Charitable Trust
- Kevin and Shelley Murphy
- Kindred Sharp Children's Trust
- Laurence William Nelson Trust
- Lions Club of Remuera
- Lois K Odering
- Lottery Grants Board
- M A Tonkinson Charitable Trust
- Mainland Foundation
- Marlborough District Council
- Marriott Trust
- Marsh Family Trust
- Maurice Paykel Charitable Trust
- Mayne Family
- Mike and Ann Thompson
- Milestone Foundation
- Mr D B Laxon
- Mr John Leggott
- Mt Wellington Foundation Ltd
- N H Taylor Charitable Trust
- Nelson City Council
- Nelson Pine Industries
- New Plymouth District Council
- Nikau Foundation
- North and South Trust Limited
- Olive Stoddard Charitable Trust
- Otago Community Trust
- Pamela Maling Memorial Trust
- Paymark
- Pelorus Trust
- Perpetual Guardian
- Peter I Talley
- Phil and Siobhan Logan
- Public Trust
- Quality Hotel Parnell
- QuickCircuit Limited
- Ray Watts Charitable Trust
- Reed Charitable Trust
- Room-Simmonds Charitable Trust
- Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust
- Roy & Jan Mace Charitable Trust
- Sir George Elliot Charitable Trust
- Steve Shallcross Family
- T M Hosking Charitable Trust
- Taumarunui Opportunity Shop
- Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui
- Ted and Mollie Carr Endowment Trust
- Tennyson Charitable Trust
- The David Ellison Charitable Trust
- The Fred Ruddenklau Charitable Trust
- The Freemasons Charity
- The Kingdom Foundation
- The Lion Foundation
- The Marjorie Barclay Charitable Trust
- The Owen and John Whitfield No 1 Fund Charitable Trust
- The Ruth Petty Trust
- The Southern Trust
- The Trusts Community Foundation Inc
- Thomas George Macarthy Trust
- Timaru Construction Ltd
- Trillian Trust Inc
- Trust Aoraki
- Trust Waikato
- W Duncan Bickley Trust Fund
- Whanganui Community Foundation
- Win Skellerup Charitable Trust
- Z Energy

Strategic Priority 1: Independent Living

People have the skills to adapt to the impact of blindness and low vision.

A total of 5,065 rehabilitation service sessions was delivered to clients. These sessions help people adapt and adjust to everyday life whilst living with vision loss. Examples include learning to move around a client's home and community safely with the use of a white cane, confidently travel on public transport, look after personal needs such as dressing, coping with social situations such as eating in restaurants, and being safe in their homes whilst preparing food and cooking.

Guide Dogs staff made 1,029 visits to clients with a guide dog. For those people new to having a guide dog, these visits focus on training the person and dog to work effectively together as a team. For those experienced guide dog handlers the visits ensure they are working safely and effectively together.

Children & Young People equipped to be successful adults.

This year the SEED leadership programme included a course specifically for youth. The programme attracted young people from around the country, who undertook a mixture of classroom based learning and outdoor activities.

Lives are enriched by social and recreation activities, peer support and connections within the community.

The Blind Foundation has increased the breadth and amount of recreational and social activities available including new cycling events, book clubs, art and dance classes, and social groups.

At the end of the year, a formal peer to peer mentoring programme was trialled in Christchurch. Initial indications from mentors and mentees are very positive.

Volunteers operate 32 local Telephone Trees – telephone support and information networks – around the country. There is also a national telephone support service by volunteers, which fielded approximately 1,400 calls this year and made outbound calls.

People adjust to vision loss by receiving counselling and support.

Throughout the year 1,149 adults and children, and their families, received Blind Foundation counselling and family counselling services to assist with their adjustment to sight loss.

The Blind Foundation recognises the importance of these services and employed additional counsellors to ensure people receive counselling and support at the earliest possible time.

More people have technology and literacy skills to be connected and informed.

A total of 1,472 people received Blind Foundation support to use a range of technology programmes and access information online.

57 clients chose to learn braille during this year.

More people can access information they need when they need it.

Almost 600,000 talking books and magazines were delivered to Blind Foundation library members across NZ.

There are more than 11,000 titles available to Blind Foundation library members through the library service, primarily in audio, braille and large print. Library members can also choose from 37 magazine titles.

Blind Foundation library members now also have access to more than 200,000 titles through the international Bookshare platform. To encourage uptake amongst library members, they are offered a free annual subscription for two years.

The 4,500 library members use the door-to-door service and / or the Blind Foundation library app, BookLink, to receive their reading materials. 700 members use the app which enables them to download the books they wish to read.

The BookLink app delivered over 80,000 hours of content. The average BookLink user downloaded 3.8 books per month in November, which had risen to 6.4 books per month by June.

The Blind Foundation provided 219,826 pages of accessibly formatted (braille, large print, electronic text) documents.

People listened to 27,382 hours of information on the Telephone Information Service (TIS). The range of information on TIS increased with 100 newspapers now available through the service.

The Blind Foundation website was redeveloped. The new accessible site is easier to navigate, with a more sophisticated search function so that people who are blind or have low vision can find information easily.

More people are employed.

584 people received vocational and employment services and support to either retain their current job, seek new employment, or study.

The Blind Foundation's employment service commenced a new way of assessing clients for work readiness during the year. The new assessment tool provides a more targeted approach to employment readiness and will assist with building stronger relationships with employment and recruitment agencies.

The aim is to assist greater numbers of blind and low vision people to secure meaningful employment.

Strategic Priority 2: Access for All

Increase the understanding of the need for accessibility.

An accessibility legislation project was established, with statistical data and legal analysis completed. A feasibility study found existing NZ legislation and regulations were insufficient to enable accessibility.

Create the conditions where blind people and those with low vision have the choice to participate in society through access to:

- The democratic process.**

The Blind Foundation worked with local councils wishing to make their 2016 local elections more accessible, and supports renewed efforts to achieve an online trial in 2019.

- The built environment and community spaces.**

The Blind Foundation contributed to 41 government and local council submissions, including to Christchurch, Tauranga, Palmerston North and Wellington City Councils.

The Blind Foundation completed many advisory sessions with government, local council and private companies to improve plans for buildings and public spaces.

- Information, communications and services.**

The Blind Foundation continued to advocate for the need to protect print disabled people's right to accessible formats. In relation to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the Blind Foundation contributed to those protections being explicitly included in the final agreement and consequent NZ legislation.

Meanwhile, the minimum number of countries (20) ratified the Marrakesh Treaty. It comes into force on 30 September, freeing up copyright across borders. The Blind Foundation worked with the Government, rights-holders and disability organisations to progress the ratification of the treaty by NZ.

The Electoral Commission and the Flag Consideration Panel sought the Blind Foundation's input on the flag referendum. We produced official descriptions for the long list of flags and tactile versions of the five finalists. We also created accessible referendum leaflets and documents, and ensured the official website was accessible.

The Blind Foundation advised the Reserve Bank of New Zealand on how to make the new bank notes more accessible.

The Blind Foundation BookLink app, which launched in November 2015, offers books, magazines and newspapers to library users.

- Technology and Equipment.**

The Blind Foundation continues to provide an equipment service for all clients.

- Training, higher education and employment.**

The Blind Foundation held two leadership programmes, called SEED. After the three day courses, attendees completed community projects which included developing a youth strategy and establishing social groups. One participant created a Blind Foundation 125th anniversary event and another trained as a mental health advocate.

Influence technology design so it is accessible and easy to use.

In March, the Orbit Braille Reader launched. It provides Braille users with a low-cost electronic braille device for reading e-books. The Blind Foundation was a significant contributor.

Every public library will have access to a print disability collection.

The Blind Foundation established community-based support networks in libraries, with four local councils. The networks enable people who are blind or have low vision to receive support and access the Blind Foundation's library app, BookLink, locally rather than directly through Blind Foundation staff.

Empower our clients, and their whanau and families, to be effective self-advocates and campaigners.

The Blind Foundation's first Access for All Advocacy Network has been formed. This grassroots movement for social change began with an indepth training workshop.

Be a trusted advisor and influence decision makers to take action.

The Blind Foundation continued to work with international organisations. Some highlights:

- led the World Blind Union's Asia-Pacific (WBU AP) campaign on the Marrakesh Treaty ratification. This included launching a report by the UN Development Programme and WBU AP to be used for countries in their ratification process.
- helped the Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities form a sub-committee about accessible tactile graphics. This is the first Australasian effort to co-ordinate best practice in this fast-changing aspect of accessible information.

- increased the active membership of the Round Table by three organisations. This will help continue progressing the rights of people with a print disability.

Blind Foundation staff sit on many other bodies:

- Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities DAISY consortium.
- International Guide Dog Federation.
- Blind Sector Forum Aotearoa New Zealand (BSFANZ).
- Braille Authority of New Zealand Aotearoa Trust (BANZAT).
- Blind Low Vision Education Network New Zealand (BLENNZ).
- Macular Degeneration New Zealand (MDNZ).
- Vision 2020.

The Blind Foundation contributed to Government groups and committees including:

- Statistics NZ & Office of Disability Issues Disability Data & Evidence Working Group.
- Ministry of Health Low Vision Working Group.
- the National Health Committee Age-Related Macular Degeneration Reference Group.

The disability research the Blind Foundation commissioned AUT to complete was provided to the Ministries of Business Innovation and Employment, and Social Development.

New Zealand's first 'Why Accessibility Matters Research Forum' was hosted by the Blind Foundation, and supported by Be. Accessible and CCS Disability Action in June. Attendees included representatives from Statistics NZ, local councils and disability sector organisations. Questions raised at the workshop have since informed work being developed by Statistics NZ.

Strategic Priority 3: Reach More People

Enhance our current services.

Clients report a satisfaction rate of 93.7% annual average rating for the service they receive from the Blind Foundation.

Increase awareness of the Blind Foundation services.

The Blind Foundation reported a record year in media coverage breaking the \$6m value mark for the first time. This relates to articles across local and national newspapers, radio, television and online.

Engagement work continued with eye health specialists including:

- speaking at the annual Royal Australian New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists conference.
- educational evenings for professionals at clinics and at Blind Foundation offices throughout the year.
- articles in the monthly NZ Optics magazine.
- invitations to Blind Foundation events including research presentations.

Extend our presence and connections in the community so people get advice, support and services.

Registration under the Chief Executive approved service membership allowed an additional 159 people to receive services who, without this status, would not have received our support. They benefited from services targeted to meet their assessed functional requirements.

Provide eye care education to reduce avoidable vision loss.

As a Trustee of V2020NZ, an organisation focused on reducing preventable vision loss, the Blind Foundation Chief Executive co-led

a project to revitalise partnerships with the eye health sector. The aim was to co-ordinate a response to avoidable vision loss.

In June, the Blind Foundation led 'A Conversation on the future of Eye Health' with representatives from a wide range of organisations and associations with an influence and interest in eye health. At this meeting, a commitment to an eye health promotion programme was formed.

Respond to the needs of people with low vision currently unable to access services.

A discovery phase to identify this unreach group of potential clients is well underway. Collaborative work with government agencies has resulted in ensuring this group of individuals is represented by the Blind Foundation. Future focus includes work on understanding the client base and influencing policy decisions for service delivery models.

Accelerate the use of technology to reach more people.

The Blind Foundation is exploring ways to encourage more clients to be active online. These include enhanced training, more enticement to use online channels and partnering with other organisations.

Be recognised as a trusted advisor contributing to evidence based research.

The Blind Foundation presented the Prevalence Study research paper to eye health professionals, and is awaiting formal publication. The Study identified New Zealand's current low vision population (6/12 to 6/23) to be 44,300. It will be used to better understand the potential needs of this population segment.

Strategic Priority 4: Build a Foundation for the future

Build a culture of innovation, excellence and continuous improvement.

The Blind Foundation moved to a new model of contracting with its principal government agency. Results based accountabilities contracting was introduced and the Blind Foundation is working for the first time within this new framework.

The Blind Foundation successfully completed two Ministry of Health audits related to claims processes and service delivery and compliance. Both audits demonstrated satisfactory outcomes.

Almost 65% of the calls coming into the Blind Foundation are answered at the point of first contact, providing an improved experience for callers.

Grow financial sustainability through diversification that provides social benefits.

Foundation Properties Limited, a subsidiary of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind, continues to grow and develop our investment properties in order to help fund our essential services. During the year our investment property portfolio grew by almost 20% in value.

Evolve service and business models that extends reach into the community.

The Blind Foundation supported a low cost, mobile eye screening device developed by a New Zealand based start-up, ODocs. The aim of this device is to provide eye screenings for people who might not ordinarily be able to afford a test.

Actively work to increase funding through current and new revenue streams.

The Blind Foundation secured a three year tenure of contract from the Ministry of Health to deliver essential blindness service ensuring the needs of blind and low vision clients continue to be met.

Ministry of Social Development funding continued to enable vocational support to those seeking employment and vocational support.

Accident Compensation Contracts were renegotiated for an extended period ensuring clients requiring rehabilitation following accidents are able to secure services.

Continue to develop the capability and culture of our workforce and volunteers.

The Blind Foundation invested in its people through a leadership development programme and a range of in-house courses and seminars throughout the year.

The fourth annual STAR Awards were held to recognise the valuable, and valued, contributions of staff and volunteers. The awards celebrate success and encourage a culture where people can be their best.

Increase capability to engage and connect with the wider community.

The annual Blind Foundation Engagement Roadshow took place in spring and autumn this year. More than 500 people attended the sessions around the country. The Roadshow is an opportunity for clients, volunteers and support people to voice their opinions and

seek information about the Blind Foundation from Board and management.

The Blind Foundation sought the opinions of blind and low vision people in a range of projects including the Marrakesh Treaty, the Blind Foundation website redevelopment and the Blind Foundation app development.

The Blind Foundation worked with young people to co-create a youth engagement strategy. This was the first time the Blind Foundation had taken this approach in developing a strategy.

Increase our performance by making the most of technology.

Work is underway to introduce a digital strategy for the Blind Foundation to ensure our systems provide an optimised platform for future service and client benefit.

Ensure best practice guardianship of long-term assets.

Work continues to ensure the Blind Foundation's properties are well maintained and leveraged for clients and staff.

Grow social sector leadership with Government, national and international partners.

The Coalition for Accessibility Research has been formed with interested parties creating a pan-disability Alliance for Accessibility Legislation campaign.

Embed partnerships to leverage future opportunities.

Throughout the year, the Blind Foundation

has continued to develop relationships with a range of organisations with common interests. These include:

- Be. Accessible.
- Royal Australian New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists.
- New Zealand Association of Optometrists.
- Deaf Aotearoa.
- CCS Disability Action.

NZQA approved the New Zealand Diploma in Vision Habilitation/Rehabilitation with strands in orientation and mobility, daily living, low vision therapy and technology and communication. It was developed by the Industrial Training Organisation for the NZ Health and Wellbeing sector, Careerforce, in association with the Blind Foundation (and other stakeholders). The diploma enables New Zealanders wishing to pursue a career in this field to study locally. This will provide the Blind Foundation with a future workforce.

Be a socially responsible organisation.

The Blind Foundation supported dictation voting for the Board of Director elections.

The Blind Foundation has improved processes to meet the new Health Safety Work Act legislation. This will ensure staff, contractors and all visitors continue to enter a safe and responsible organisation.

The ACC Workplace Safety Management programme audit was passed, resulting in a 10% reduction of ACC levies.

Financial review

The financial year ending 30 June 2016 was another positive one for the Blind Foundation.

Financial Results

The Blind Foundation operating revenue was \$32.7m, an 8% increase of \$2.4m on the previous financial year, mainly due to donations and legacies from our loyal supporters.

Blind Foundation income was further improved by interest and dividend income of \$1.9m and increases in the value of bonds and investment assets of \$1.2m.

This year the Blind Foundation has also benefitted from a full year's distribution from its property subsidiary Foundation Properties Limited of \$3.1m.

Operating expense has increased this year by \$5.1m to \$38.4m. This was significantly impacted by a change in policy for the economic life of the Blind Foundation's building assets. Previously buildings were depreciated over 50 - 100 years. This has now changed to 25 - 100 years resulting in additional depreciation charge of approximately \$2.9m in this financial year.

In addition the Blind Foundation has been implementing its new strategic plan which has resulted in increases to the "Supporting Independent Living" expenses relating to additional core service provision and volunteer and recreation programmes; and investment in a policy and accessibility programme with the goal of increased access for clients in all spheres of daily living.

Overall, the financial results this year are pleasing, with the Blind Foundation generating a total surplus for the year of \$0.2m compared to \$2.2m the previous year. Although this is a reduction, if we remove the additional depreciation charge included in expenses, this total surplus would have been \$3.1m.

Financial Position

Purchases of new bonds and investments of \$1.7m, along with the further increase in value of those investments of \$1.2m have increased the strength of our balance sheet.

In addition prudent management has enabled us to maintain the value of our assets and reduce liabilities, resulting in an increase to net assets of \$0.2m.

The Blind Foundation remains very dependent on charitable giving which provides over 70% of the operating income. Competition for the donor dollar remains incredibly high, and we are hugely grateful to our supporters who give generously to help provide essential services to New Zealanders who are blind or have low vision.

Greg Hurn
Executive Director Finance

Summarised financial information

	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s

Revenue and expense for the year ended 30 June 2016

Revenue	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s
Donations and legacies	24,074	20,834
Service contracts	8,151	8,073
Property income	181	1,016
Other income	275	382
Total operating revenue	32,681	30,305
Expense		
Supporting independent living	18,040	14,598
Supporting access for all	4,826	4,523
Reaching more people	2,146	1,888
Building a foundation for the future	6,460	5,574
Fundraising	5,893	5,632
Grants	590	609
Governance	331	374
Indirect property costs	134	85
Total operating expenses	38,420	33,283
Operating deficit	(5,739)	(2,978)
Finance income	1,945	2,110
Revaluation of investment property	(282)	241
Revaluation of bonds and investments	1,247	1,745
Dividend received from Foundation Properties Limited	3,060	1,123
Total surplus	231	2,241

Assets and liabilities at 30 June 2016

	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s
Current assets	5,293	5,799
Investment property	1,168	1,865
Other non current assets	87,990	88,031
Total assets	94,451	95,695
Current liabilities	3,657	5,151
Non current liabilities	141	122
Total liabilities	3,798	5,273
Net assets	90,653	90,422

	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s

Cash flow for the year ended 30 June 2016

Cash flows from operating activities	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s
<i>Cash was received from:</i>		
Donations and legacies	25,489	20,953
Service contracts	7,932	8,244
Rental income	181	892
Other income	259	111
<i>Cash was applied to:</i>		
Payments to employees	(18,860)	(17,324)
Payments to suppliers	(14,169)	(12,345)
Payments of grants	(590)	(609)
Net cash flows from operating	242	(78)
Cash flows from investing activities	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s
<i>Cash was received from:</i>		
Interest income	463	1,137
Sale of fixed assets	5	284
Dividend received from Foundation Properties Limited	2,426	1,123
Advance from subsidiary	-	512
<i>Cash was applied to:</i>		
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	(1,744)	(3,643)
Acquisition of bonds and investments	(1,201)	(208)
Acquisition of intangible assets	(453)	(250)
Net cash flows from investing	(504)	(1,045)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and equivalents	2016	2015
	\$000s	\$000s
Cash and equivalents at the beginning of the year	2,678	3,801
Cash and equivalents at the end of the year	2,416	2,678



Clients touch a sculpture at the Auckland Art Gallery.
Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and David St George.

Support us

Make a life-changing difference for Kiwis who are blind or have low vision.

It costs approximately \$34 million and many volunteer hours each year to provide vital services that support New Zealanders who are blind or have low vision to live a life without limits.

The Blind Foundation relies on the generosity of people across the country, who donate their time and/or money to support our services in the community.

If you already support the Blind Foundation, thank you so much. Please don't underestimate the impact of your support.

If you have been inspired by what you have read in this report and would like to make a difference, please consider volunteering or donating.

Blind Foundation volunteers provide a wide range of vision-related support, assist with fundraising and help with group activities for people who are blind or have low vision. Volunteering provides a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, learn new skills, share existing skills and have fun, while giving something back to the community.

There are many ways to support the Blind Foundation with a donation: you can make regular donations, a one-off gift, leave a gift in your Will, become a corporate partner, hold a community event or take part in a fundraising sports activity.

To find out more about how you can help, visit blindfoundation.org.nz or call us on 0800 24 33 33.



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