

## **DYSLEXIA NORTH EAST**

(A company limited by guarantee)

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

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The trustees for Dyslexia North East, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2014.

#### **1. Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors**

Charity name: Dyslexia North East

Working name: Dyslexia North East England

Registered Charity No: 1129358      Registered in England and Wales

Registered Company Limited by Guarantee No: 06707963      Registered in England and Wales

Local Dyslexia Association affiliated to the British Dyslexia Association.

Registered Office: 6 Green Close Stonington Morpeth Northumberland NE61 6PE

#### Trustees/Directors of Dyslexia North East

Mr Roland Craig	Chairperson (re-elected 2014)
Dr Elizabeth Ferguson	Secretary /CEO (re-elected 2014)
Mrs Mary Kendall	Treasurer (elected 2011)
Mrs Angela Guy	(elected 2008)
Mrs Wendy McGauley	(elected 2010)
Mrs Sally Lovatt	(elected 2011)
Miss Susan Tron MBE	(elected 2013)
Dr Raj George	(elected 2013)
Jeni Parker	(elected 2013)
Stephen Hutton	(elected 2014)
Joanne Green	(elected 2014)

#### Independent Examiner

Jim Dodds  
Ellison Services Ltd  
Higham House  
Higham Place  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8AF

#### Bank

Co-operative Bank,  
PO Box 250 Skelmersdale,  
Lancashire WN8 6WT

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For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

## **2. Structure, Governance and Management**

Dyslexia North East is a Company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. As a Company limited by guarantee, the Trustees have agreed that if the Charitable Company has to be wound up, the Trustees would be liable for £1 each. Currently there are 11 Trustees, and 92 Members, which includes 57 paid up Members and 35 due to renew membership. Dyslexia North East is a Local Dyslexia Association of the British Dyslexia Association. The majority of Members have joint shared Membership of both Organisations.

### Appointment and Retirement of Trustees

The Trustees are elected at the AGM and posts and skills of Trustees are reviewed on a regular basis, particularly as the requirements of the Charity change and expand. Other Trustees can be co-opted at a Trustees meeting according to the governing document. At the last AGM in January 9th 2014 it was agreed that the maximum number of Trustees would be 11. A special memorandum was passed at this AGM to increase the number of Trustees from 10 to 11. Potential Trustees are approached on personal recommendation and references, as well as advertising for applicants in the NCVS and Volunteer Newsletters. Retiring Trustees are eligible for re-election. One third of the Trustees retire from office at every AGM by rotation. The AGM is held in January annually.

### Organisation

The Trustees Board meet monthly to review activities and financial issues. The Organisation of Trustee roles is regularly reviewed and updated, with extra management meetings instituted according to need. The Chief Executive appointed on January 9th 2014 takes responsibility for co-ordinating the activities and organisation of the Charity's functions, and arranges appropriate meetings and events. Where possible, responsibilities are shared out between different trustees according to their interests and skills. Management of the Charity's finances are part of this responsibility. Since the beginning of the year, after our Away-Day led by Dr Raj George in March 2014, leadership roles and responsibilities were outlined and shared. Dyslexia North East has had the benefit of monthly finance meetings and also additional planning meetings for teens and children's activities.

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

#### **3. Objectives and Activities**

The Objects of the Charity are to promote the advancement of education, and to give support to people affected by specific learning difficulties and related conditions, so as to assist them to achieve their full potential.

- **Our Vision** is to create a Society that celebrates difference.
- We seek to promote knowledge, skills and understanding of dyslexia.
- We aim to improve our Outreach to individuals and families with dyslexia, both adults and children.
- We aim to raise awareness in the Community, and encourage Dyslexia Friendly Schools, Colleges and Workplaces.

The Charity has continued to hold twice monthly educational and topical meetings of interest for both parents and professionals. Over the past year there have been monthly activities arranged for 10+ and teenage children to boost their confidence and self-esteem. The meetings have been held at the Royal Grammar Junior School, Jesmond (with the kind permission of the Head Master).

**Other activities** have been organised with great success, for example a visit to Northern Print and Kirkley Woods for children to experience fun outdoor activities. Other sessions included making models for a special animation movie, a visit to Moorhouse Scout centre in Durham for challenging outdoor activities, and as a contrast a workshop session on Mindfulness for parents and children.

**In May 2014 a Dyslexia Matters Conference** was held at The Centre of Life for parents, teachers and others interested in caring for dyslexics. 86 delegates attended. Other Organisations, including St Bees School, SEN marketing, Harvey's Opticians, Selling Smiles, and the Parent/Partnerships had Display stalls, and an optometrist Stuart Henderson demonstrated information about visual stress. Dyslexia NE is indebted to Jay Johnston of Marketing Solutions, and Duncan Fisher of the Apartment Group who donated the Artwork and Printing production of the Conference Brochure free of charge. We were very fortunate to have excellent speakers who imparted their knowledge: namely Simon Donald our patron, Carol Allen and Jamie Munroe with ICT gadgets and tips and Hywell Roberts talking about how to engage youngsters to learn "accidentally". The feedback from delegates who came was very positive, and appreciative of the Conference.

**In June 2014 Dyslexia North East showed 'The Big Picture' at Jam Jar Theatre Whitley Bay**, to raise awareness about dyslexia, and how it affects families. This was a great success, and Dyslexia North East plans to show this again on other occasions.

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For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

The Trustees work hard to deliver information, guidance and support to any family or individual who seeks help. Also a great deal of thought is given to producing a Programme of Events and Activities to benefit Members and anyone who wishes to come. **The Meetings and Events are open to all.** Information and support was supplied by email, website, Newsletters, face-to-face contacts and telephone.

**Workshops were delivered to raise awareness about dyslexia** in 2 Workplaces – HMRC in Newcastle and Peterlee, a Dyslexia Awareness presentation to Rotary members in Hartlepool, 2 Workshops in School for Parents and children in Primary and Secondary education in Tynemouth. Information display stalls at our Dyslexia Matters Conference and at Newcastle College and Seven Stories, Newcastle.

**10 Dyslexia** Assessments were delivered by an Educational Psychologist, and 3 by a Specialist Teacher/Tutor.

**13 Cogmed memory training courses** were delivered and demonstrations given. As a result of this, a School in Gosforth has purchased a Cogmed licence to use in their classes, and support has been given to students doing PGCE. Trustees and members were encouraged to attend appropriate training courses and information days.

**Dyslexia North East has benefitted from the expertise of two new Trustees.** Steve Hutton with his accounting skills, and supervising the Finance Subcommittee. Joanne Green who is a trained Occupational Therapist and has initiated a Handwriting Course, specifically to help dyslexics and dyspraxics improve their writing and co-ordination skills. Jeni Parker, a Specialist Dyslexia Teacher and very knowledgeable about ICT, has been invaluable in supporting Trustees and parents of dyslexic children. Jeni continues to monitor and extend publicity about events and information via Twitter and facebook with 1283 followers now. A Load2Learn Licence is being used by dyslexics to access books on the internet, free of charge.

**Public Benefit** In setting the objectives and activities of the Charity, the Trustees make sure that the guidelines of the Charity Commission are followed, as defined in the Charities Act 2006, so that its purposes benefit members of the public.

## **DYSLEXIA NORTH EAST**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

#### **4. Achievements and Performance.**

During 2014, Dyslexia North East has made significant advances towards supporting those affected by dyslexia, in the North East of England.

**We have employed our first member of staff**, to assist the CEO on a sessional basis.

**Dyslexia North East has developed a robust Business Plan.**

**Dyslexia North East is poised to move into its own premises at Denton Burn Library, Newcastle in early 2015.**

**Dyslexia North East has secured a legacy** and funding to boost reserves in order to fulfil our dream of providing desperately needed help and support for dyslexics in the North East.

**Dyslexia North East is becoming more widely known, and attracting more funders and supporters.**

**Dyslexia North East is linking up with Sunderland University and the SID project**, a Social Inclusion Dyslexia Project in Sunderland, to offer Joint Dyslexia Conferences and Workshop courses, together with mutual support for education and improving opportunities for dyslexics. A "Dyslexia Matters Conference" is planned for Adults with dyslexia, in March 2015.

**Dyslexia NE is increasing its Membership**, but constantly needs to monitor renewal of Membership as sometimes people join with enthusiasm, then once they have received the help and support they need, do not necessarily continue to come to events and meetings.

**Dyslexia NE has benefitted from affiliation to the British Dyslexia Association**, as Members can share membership advantages and receive Dyslexia Contact magazine. Also there is information and knowledge obtainable from the BDA staff about issues and concerns.

**During Dyslexia Awareness week from November 3rd to 9th 2014**, Dyslexia North East hosted a stall at Seven Stories Book Centre in Newcastle. Information and support was available for anyone with dyslexia as well as enquiries from others who wanted to know more. We were delighted to welcome a visit from Simon Donald our Patron to the event.

**The Adult Group for Dyslexics** continues to meet at The Chillingham in Heaton. This has been important as a good number of adults have been coming along to monthly meetings, to receive information and support, as well as invited speakers to give topical presentations.

**Improving and extending our Resources Library** has continued to be successful. This has enabled more parents and children to borrow books in appropriate format and font, as well as reference books for parents to increase their knowledge about dyslexia.

## **DYSLEXIA NORTH EAST**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

**Cogmed Memory training courses** have continued to be very successful and a number of children and adults have completed the course. Cogmed is monitored and supervised by one of our Trustees, Mary Kendall, and also Jill Everett a teacher and Member of Dyslexia North East. This has been valuable for children as well as adults and helped to improve their confidence and memory responses.

**More volunteers** have offered to support the work of Dyslexia North East. Dyslexia North East was delighted to take part in a Progression and Enrichment Fair at Newcastle College in September 2014. This offered an opportunity for more volunteers to offer their services, and for Dyslexia North East to raise awareness about dyslexia.

**Dyslexia North East is looking forward to establishing a base and Dyslexia Centre** at Denton Burn Library in Newcastle in early 2015. Currently refurbishment is being carried out in the building and it is hoped that the altered premises will be ready for occupation in early 2015. The building will be shared between Newcastle City Council, local residents with their library, and Newcastle College students. This offers a wonderful opportunity to provide many more services to help and support dyslexics across the North East.

**Fund Raising** has been important for raising the profile of Dyslexia North East and helping our resources. We are indebted to Phil Knowles who took part in the Great North Run this year and has raised over £524 to date. Dyslexia North East is really grateful for the support of our Patron Simon Donald, who regularly hosts Fund Raising gigs to support our work with dyslexics. His talent as a cartoonist has been greatly valued by our young dyslexics also.

**Regular Newsletters** have been produced and circulated amongst our members and contacts. This has been produced by Wendy McGauley and has had contributions by our dyslexic members and parents.

**New Ventures** are planned for 2015 to extend our work with supporting parents through a "Talking Circle" and other avenues of training and workshops.

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### TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 30 September 2014

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#### 5. Financial Review

Recession in the UK continues to affect charities, businesses, public services and ordinary people. However, we remain indebted to the generosity of our sponsors and funders, and would like to acknowledge with grateful thanks:

RW Mann Trust	£600 for general running costs
Hospital of God Trust	£1,000 for administrative support
Reeds Grassroots Fund	£3,000 for administrative support
Carillion	£500 for equipment
Simon Donald's Entertainment Event	£1,079.50 to fund assessment and tuition

Additionally an individual legacy of £18,848 was received which is held as a designated reserve in a building society account for future staffing and Rental costs requirements.

During the year a Finance and Fund Raising Sub-Committee was established which meets on a monthly basis. This Sub-Committee helps the trustees to make financial decisions about the activities of Dyslexia NE and to plan for controlled growth with financial stability. It also considers and assesses bids for funding before submission.

Further grants are being applied for to fund a project with a minimum duration of 3 years for a Coordinator to develop the work and services of Dyslexia North East over the foreseeable future.

Excluding the £18,848 legacy referred to above income has remained stable at £18,025 compared to £17,742 for the previous year. Expenditure has been reduced from £14,407 to £10,071. Less funds/expenditure was received/incurred through assessments but more was realised from fund raising and from the Conference and Workshops fees.

We are pleased to report a total surplus of £26,801 increasing reserves from £11,218 to £38,020 of which £3,595 are classed as restricted. These reserves together with active fundraising and tight accounting practices should help us to achieve our strategic growth objectives for the coming year.

#### Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees recognises the need to maintain adequate unrestricted financial reserves to meet unforeseeable contingencies currently £34,425. The Trustees will maintain a projection of income for at least 12 months ahead, and will continue to ensure that funding is sought from as wide a variety of sources as possible.

The Trustees will take all necessary steps to ensure that at no time in the foreseeable future, would it be possible for ending one or more income streams to present a serious challenge to the future of the organisation, that it could not be managed, in such a way, as to continue to provide an effective and sustainable service.

## **DYSLEXIA NORTH EAST**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

---

In reviewing costs that would continue, should a significant reduction in income be experienced, the Trustees have determined to work towards maintaining unrestricted reserves at a level equivalent to redundancy costs plus at least 3 months core operating expenditure. At 30 September 2014 the unrestricted reserves represent an excess of this target level.

#### **6. Plans for the Future of Dyslexia North East**

The plan for the future of Dyslexia North East is to establish a base at Denton Burn Library so that Dyslexia North East can offer effective teaching, family learning, assessment and information with support to anyone with dyslexia who needs help.

##### **The outcome of plans and funding bids would provide:**

- **Support a greater number of dyslexics** with teaching, mentoring and community outreach sessions.
- **Expand provision to include new and unrepresented groups** such as dyslexics from ethnic minorities and dyslexics on low incomes.
- **Develop services** to support employers and employees at work and teachers in schools and colleges as well as for parents helping their children at home.
- **Providing family learning opportunities** and supporting families struggling to cope with dyslexia and behaviour issues.
- **Offering bespoke sessions for teenagers and young people** who are unemployed and disengaged from work because of dyslexia.
- **Increasing the number of assessment appointments and interventions** that could help support dyslexics such as ICT and Cogmed memory courses, handwriting and coordination sessions

**Dyslexia North East works hard to network with other agencies**, including the British Dyslexia Association, cooperation with Sunderland University and a new group called Social Inclusion and Dyslexia Project in Sunderland to help adults. Another new group has been established in Teesside to help support dyslexics in Stockton, Darlington, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough. Contacts have been made with some of their members and information shared.

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**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

For the year ended 30 September 2014

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**7. Small Companies Provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees and Directors of Dyslexia North East have read and approved this Annual Report,

which is signed by:

Mr Roland J. Craig BEd(Hons) ACoT(SpLD) MCoT

Chairperson for Dyslexia North East

Signature:

Date: