

DYSLEXIA NORTH EAST ENGLAND

(A company limited by guarantee)

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 30 September 2015

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 2015.

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 Stannington Morpeth Northumberland NE61 6PE

Dyslexia North East Office: Wallsend Town Hall Chambers, High Street East, Wallsend. NE28 7AT.

Trustees/Directors of Dyslexia North East as stated at the AGM on 8 Jan 2015

Mr Roland Craig	Chairperson (re-elected 2014)
Miss Susan Tron MBE	Vice Chair (elected 2013)
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)
Stephen Hutton	(elected 2014)
Robbie Redpath	(elected 2015)
Joanne Green	(elected 2014) (resigned 9.6.15)

Members of the Finance Committee

Stephen Hutton Chair, Susan Tron Vice Chair, Mary Kendall Treasurer, Liz Ferguson CEO.

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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2. Structure, Governance and Management

Dyslexia North East is a Company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. Currently there are 9 Trustees, and 106 Members which includes a number who are in the process of renewing 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. 2 Members of Dyslexia North East represent Members at the Local Dyslexia Association meetings of the BDA, namely Jeni Parker and Catherine Davidson.

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. Potential Trustees are approached by personal recommendation together with CV and references. Trustees are sought by advertising for applicants via the NCVS, Volunteer Centre Newsletters, and other places. 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. Joanne Green one of the Trustees resigned on 9.6.2015 because she is moving to Leeds. Sally Lovatt is retiring at the AGM on January 14th 2016, due to pressure of work commitments. Two Trustees are presently being sought to fill these posts.

Organisation

The Trustees Board including the Finance Committee 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 Liz Ferguson, 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 expertise and skills. Management of the Charity's finances are part of this responsibility.

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.

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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 regular activities arranged for 10+ and teenage children to boost their confidence and self-esteem and an Adult group has been meeting monthly at different venues. Meetings for Parents and children, and teachers have been held at the Royal Grammar Junior School, Jesmond (with the kind permission of the Head Master).

These Meetings are open to all, whether they are Members or non-Members.

A Dyslexia Matters Conference was held at The Glass Centre in Sunderland on Saturday March 21st 2015 for parents, teachers and others interested in dyslexia. 86 delegates attended. It was a great success and delegates gave favourable feedback. Meeting in Sunderland for the first time was a new experience and was organised together with Sunderland University and the SID Project (Social Inclusion Dyslexia Project in Sunderland). Dyslexia NE is indebted to Jay Johnston of Marketing Solutions, and Duncan Fisher of the Apartment Group who donated funding of the Artwork and Printing production of the Conference Brochure.

We were very fortunate to have excellent speakers who imparted their knowledge: namely Mehrban Sadiq Chair of the Asian Fire Service, Kate Saunders from BDA, Dr Stephen MacDonald Sunderland University Lecturer, Michelle Jeffries from Learning Labs Technology, Joanne Youngson (SID), Stuart Henderson Optometrist, Sonia Redpath Parent of a dyslexic child, Rachael Ingham Dyslexia Support Teacher, Karen Tait Sunderland University Lecturer. Also Dr Ashley McKie Clinical Psychologist and Alison Dennison Mental Health Worker. John Addison who has Dyslexia, and Claudia van Lieshout Smit presented a joint project about "Walking Art". Rachel Jones-Wild gave a session of Mindfulness in the penultimate session. The Conference Programme offered delegates a wide ranging opportunity to hear about different aspects of coping with their Dyslexia experience, and also to take part in discussions and networking.

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 at

- Northumberland C of E Academy in Ashington for Parents and Teachers
- Denbigh Community Primary School in Wallsend for Parents
- Stadium of Light in Sunderland for Student Teachers
- An Information Day at the North Tyneside Disability Forum in Shiremoor
- St Benet's School, Ouston, Chester le Street, Workshop for Teachers.

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21 Dyslexia Assessments were delivered by Educational Psychologists.

4 Dyslexia Assessments were delivered by specialist Dyslexia Teachers

6 Cogmed memory training courses were delivered for children between ages 7-11, and demonstrations given to 2 adults who are about to start a Course.

2 IDL (Indirect Dyslexia Learning Courses) are also being delivered to parents and children, with more in the pipeline.

Expanding Ventures An Adult Group has continued to meet monthly at Denton Burn Community Centre and other venues earlier in the year, but now meets at Wallsend Town Hall premises. This is being expanded to include meetings with speakers and Literacy support. We have welcomed the support of Chris Murray, Cathy Stark and Judith Rust for this Group.

In addition Courses in Literacy for Adult Learners have been delivered by Sarah Robinson, a special needs teacher, at the Wallsend Premises.

We have extended activities for younger children and older children to offer a wider range of activity for their benefit.

A new Support group for Parents and Teachers has been started in Durham and another in Hexham.

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.

4. Achievements and Performance.

During 2014 and 2015, Dyslexia North East had been searching for office premises to enable the Charity to operate from its own base to serve the North East of England.

For 18 months Dyslexia North East was in discussion with Newcastle City Library and Newcastle College about sharing premises at Denton Burn Library in the West end of Newcastle. In April 2015, the Trustees of Dyslexia North East were presented with a proposal that would be unaffordable and unsustainable for the Charity. Regrettably Dyslexia North East had to withdraw from this Partnership arrangement.

In July 2015 Dyslexia North East was fortunate to obtain premises to rent as an office base in Wallsend Town Hall Chambers. These premises had been refurbished and the new office space acquired for rent has enabled Dyslexia North East to provide administrative support for all the activities and also provide space for Assessment, Mentoring, Consultation and Teaching.

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The office space provides facilities for a lending library, equipment and resources for teaching and workshops. As more activities are designed and developed the facilities will be expanded and utilised.

Dyslexia North East was successful in obtaining funding for IT equipment for use by teachers in order to deliver workshops and group training and teaching for parents and children as well as teachers. This funding has enabled us to purchase 5 laptop computers with colour keyboards, and a set of 10 mini iPads to be used with the Apple TV and screen, and a PC with 2 printers. This equipment will provide invaluable resources to extend help and support for Dyslexics of all ages and experience. Currently training programmes and planning the workshops is in progress. A Workshop for Parents, Children and Teachers is planned for October 2015, with Laura Dickinson from the Regional Apple IT Training Centre, to initiate a new approach to learning using iPad technology and the Apple TV.

Fundraising activities have included an Entertainment Comedy night with Simon Donald and Friends in April 2015, a courageous abseiling event in the Lake District by Bob and Ian Kendall and a sponsored walk along the Roman Wall in July by Dave Devall-McMurray.

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 2015 Dyslexia North East has helped to establish support groups in Durham and Hexham. These two groups are being organised by local parents and teachers to enable more regular support to be offered for parents with Dyslexic children, especially as many are not able to attend meetings in Newcastle of Dyslexia North East. We are attempting to advertise more widely to reach out to more parents and teachers to enable them to get the help they need. Social media, the Website and Newsletters are an important way of achieving this. In September a new Website was installed by Astrofox, one of the business partners at Wallsend Town Hall.

The new look Website has been well received and has opportunities for emailing Dyslexia North East directly, in addition to the Twitter and Facebook connections. The new look has offered a more user friendly site, so people can obtain the information they need and contact the Charity directly.

Activities for Children to boost their self-esteem and confidence. The children have enjoyed an outing to Taught in the Wood, where they delighted in making a den and taking part in an obstacle course. Another group of children attended the Metro young driver centre and benefitted from taking part in a stimulating pursuit. Other activities are planned for the future.

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 Everrett a teacher and Member of Dyslexia North East. This has been valuable for children as well as adults and helped to improve their concentration and memory responses.

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More volunteers have offered to support the work of Dyslexia North East. In June 2015 there was a volunteer event at North Shields Library. Several people enquired about Dyslexia North East activities and as a result of this 14 people signed up to help Dyslexia North East in the future. Some of these volunteers have already started work and it has been encouraging.

New Ventures for Dyslexia North East include a Handwriting course during the Autumn of 2014, led by Joanne Green, Occupational Therapist and Jill Everrett, Specialist Teacher has proved a great success. This course took place over 6 weeks at RGS Junior School and this helped 6 children improve their handwriting along with guidance for parents. The course was repeated in the Spring 2015. In September 2015 a Handwriting course was held at Linskill Centre, North Shields. This was a really good venue for Handwriting and Movement classes. This activity has been put on hold temporarily because Joanne Green has moved to Leeds. We need to find another OT to help us with Handwriting courses.

Talking Circle for Parents Sonia Redpath started a Talking Circle for parents to help support them with strategies to enable their children to achieve more confidence and self esteem. It has been a very helpful platform for exchange of views and experience of coping with Dyslexic children. Currently this has taken place on a monthly basis, and the children have been given interesting practical activities at the same time.

Future Activities for Dyslexia North East are being planned with more Conferences for Teachers and Parents and Workshops for Parents and Children. It is particularly important now to support more families as there is less support available in many schools for Dyslexic children.

Many Schools still do not have trained staff or resources to help dyslexic children. Dyslexia remains a hidden disability, and much pioneering work needs to be done to help School, Colleges and Workplaces to offer more support for dyslexics and their families.

5. Financial Review

Charities, businesses, public services and individuals continue to be affected by the UK recession. In this climate we are indebted to our sponsors and funders for their support. For the year under review we acknowledge in particular with grateful thanks:

Big Lottery Fund	£8,865 received for IT equipment
Robbie Redpath (Trustee)	£340 raised from a golf event for members
Simon Donald's entertainment event	£1,171 raised from ticket sales and auction
Family of Mary Kendall (Trustee)	£720 raised from an abseiling event.
Dave De-vall McMurray	£275 raised Roman Wall sponsored walk

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The fundraising sub-committee meets on a monthly basis. It helps the main board of trustees make financial decisions about the activities of Dyslexia NE and to plan for controlled growth with financial stability. It also monitors 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 Project Coordinator. This person will develop the work and services of Dyslexia NE from our new base in Wallsend. Securing this appointment with funding would represent a huge step forward in our progression.

Excluding the grant for IT equipment income has remained stable at £16,343 compared to £18,025 last year (excluding a legacy of £18,848).

Expenditure has increased from £10,071 to £13,856. More funds/expenditure was received/incurred through assessments but less was realised from fund raising.

We are pleased to report a surplus of £2,487 for the year increasing reserves from £38,020 to £40,507 of which £2,264 are classed as restricted. These reserves together with active fund raising and tight financial controls should help us to achieve our strategic growth objectives for the foreseeable future.

Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees recognises the need to maintain adequate unrestricted financial reserves to meet unforeseen contingencies.

At 30 September 2015 the Reserves stood at £38,243. The trustees maintain a rolling projection 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 the ending of an income stream to seriously jeopardise our future so that we could continue to provide an effective and sustainable service.

In reviewing costs that would continue, should a significant reduction in income be experienced, our policy is to maintain unrestricted reserves at a level equivalent to at least 3 months core operating expenditure. At 30 September 2015 the unrestricted reserves are well in excess of this target level.

6. Plans for the Future of Dyslexia North East

- **Support a greater number of dyslexics** with teaching, mentoring and community outreach sessions.
- **Extend our Work with Schools** by offering more Workshops to raise awareness and improve strategies to help dyslexics and teachers.

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- **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 the Social Inclusion and Dyslexia Project in Sunderland. 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.

Regular contact is made with the new Support groups in Hexham and Durham. It is hoped that a Dyslexia Support group could be established in North Northumberland during 2016.

Contacts with Colleges, Schools and Workplaces have been established, and will expand in the future.

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: