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Words from the Chair

It has been an exciting year for Scottish War Blinded as the charity continues to expand and develop. December 2015 saw the culmination of our centenary year, with the launch of new housing and a multi-purpose hall at Linburn, equipped with a bowling green, gym and space for acoustic shooting and events. Early in 2016 building work commenced in Paisley to construct the Hawkhead Centre, which will enable veterans in the West of Scotland to benefit from activities and support similar to the provision offered in the Linburn Centre.

We were delighted with the growth in our membership over the last year, with 63% more members joining us than the previous year. We have expanded our support services to members, introducing respite care and a sitting service as well as increasing the number of social activities and lunch clubs.

It is thanks to our staff, volunteers and generous members of the public who give donations and legacies that Scottish War Blinded is able to have such a positive impact on the lives of our members.

Gwenn McCreath
Chair

On 31 March 2016 we had 820 members. 216 members joined in the year.
About Scottish War Blinded

Scottish War Blinded supports service veterans with visual impairments to maintain and increase their independence and improve their quality of life.

Our vision is to see a community in which blind and partially sighted people, including those who have other disabilities, are fully included and lead fulfilling lives. Our mission is to:

• Develop people’s skills and resources for independent living
• Provide support and care to meet needs
• Support people to fulfil their aspirations
• Involve blind and partially sighted people as leaders, employees and supporters and in shaping and improving the services they receive
• Be innovative and add to the diversity of available services.

Scottish War Blinded aims to:

• Support our service veterans with visual impairments to maintain and increase their independence

• Improve the quality of life of members through social activity in an environment of dignity and respect
• Provide welcoming, safe environments
• Allow members choice and influence in developing and selecting services and activities
• Give all our members an active voice in the running of the services we provide.

The needs Scottish War Blinded aims to meet are those related to having a visual impairment and also social isolation, restricted mobility, cognitive impairment, issues of service veteran resettlement and integration, old age, financial hardship, employment and housing need.

We support our members and ensure they receive the physical, emotional and financial support they require to lead a full life. This may mean providing services ourselves, identifying external providers or advocating on our members’ behalf.
“Attending the lunch group gives me a chance to meet other people and get out of the house. It is a very comfortable group to attend and the people are very nice. I enjoy the activities. Scottish War Blinded is a wonderful organisation.”
Outreach Service

Our Outreach Service covers the whole of Scotland. Outreach workers provide a one-stop contact point for dealing with statutory and voluntary agencies, assistance with benefits and daily living skills. Our services complement, and cooperate with, local authority services and charities for visually impaired people and for service veterans. We provide equipment for members to assist them to live independently and with confidence. We enable and fund members to have respite care, and a sitting service enables members who have caring responsibilities to take part in our activities. A younger members’ group enables members from across Scotland to take part together in outdoor and other activities.

Our nine outreach workers carried out a total of 1,625 home visits to members, offering a range of support from listening over a cup of tea to supporting members going through traumatic change. Social opportunities were provided through reunions, lunch groups and our annual two day event, the Gathering.

We purchased equipment to a value of £132,000 for 216 members, an increase of £87,000 from the previous year. These included small items such as daylight bulbs and lamps, talking watches and liquid level indicators, as well as larger items, including 26 CCTV magnifiers, 17 text readers/scanners, 24 hand held electronic magnifiers and 33 hand-held illuminated magnifiers.

A total of £14,000 was spent in specific assistance to nine members to fund house repairs, decoration or adaptation. A further member received a £6,000 loan to set up a business, which he will repay gradually.

Training by the Macular Society Skills for Seeing programme enabled Outreach Workers to assist 36 members in using their residual vision, particularly in reading. We provided 12 members with support through the sitting service and arranged and funded respite care for seven members and for one member’s carer.
The Linburn Centre

The Linburn Centre in Wilkieston, outside Edinburgh, is a free activity and support centre for Scottish War Blinded members resident within travelling distance, as well as a resource for occasional use for people from further afield. Up to 35 members per day can experience a range of activities including art, woodwork, daily living skills, IT, gym, archery and acoustic shooting.

113 members are supported on a weekly basis at the Linburn Centre, with over 50 activities available. The Linburn Centre’s Rehabilitation Officer works with members to assess low vision and mobility needs as well as providing advice and free equipment.

The skills kitchen provided over 30 members each week with the opportunity to learn or develop skills which assist them in meeting their daily living tasks. Our IT suite provided over 50 sessions per week supporting members with access to training in specialist programmes, computer and other IT skills.

To support the development of our activities programme we expanded our facilities by constructing the Centenary Hall, comprising a multi-purpose hall, fully equipped gymnasium and an international standard synthetic surface bowling green.

Member participation in decision making is arranged through a members’ liaison group which meets monthly to discuss issues related to activities, management and development. A member represents the views of members on the Council and the War Blinded Committee.

We have 21 houses, including four newly built bungalows designed for our current members’ needs.

“Since attending the centre I have been able to learn new skills.”
“The staff are very caring and professional.”

“I really look forward to Mondays when I attend the centre.”
Member Stories

We have been working with Jim* for two years to support him in bringing his house up to a habitable standard. We arranged for him to go to a local hotel while his house was decorated. The decorators found they could not work in the house because of the state of the bathroom. At such short notice, it was not possible to arrange a cleaner, so our Outreach Worker donned rubber gloves and armed herself with bleach to do the job herself. This allowed the decorating to be completed and the member to return to his much refreshed house.

Thomas* has undergone treatment for cancer. In 2014 we assisted him in adapting his daughter’s garage into a bedroom, allowing him to move there and be supported by her through his treatment. He has completed his treatment and in January he moved into one of our new bungalows at Linburn. He is delighted to be back and to be able to access the Linburn Centre again.

George* was struggling to use the bath in his flat. The property was owned by a local housing association, which was sympathetic to his need for a walk - in shower but would not provide it as they expect to re-let the house eventually to a family who would need the bath. Our Outreach Worker contacted the association, who agreed that we could fund the work and they will meet the cost of the change back to a bath when he leaves the house.

Ian* lives with his wife, who is his full time carer. Her health had been poor following a stroke and was advised that nothing more could be done for her. She could not walk, but our Outreach Worker observed that she was actually able to manage stairs and to dance. Our Outreach Worker sought research papers on the woman’s stroke, discovered that symptoms can be improved by neurophysiology, identified a practitioner and took her to visit. Within twenty minutes she was able to walk again.

*Names have been changed to protect anonymity.
Scottish War Blinded celebrated its centenary year in 2015. We produced a book on our history in print and audio format and a touring exhibition.

In collaboration with the Scottish Association for Blind Bowlers we held a series of centenary matches across Scotland in which visually impaired bowlers from around Scotland were challenged by Scottish War Blinded members. The tour visited seven clubs and six new members were registered with the organisation as a direct result.

We organised a trip by 30 members and staff to Belgium to mark the Battle of Ypres where the use of mustard gas resulted in thousands of servicemen acquiring a visual impairment, leading to our foundation in April 1915. This proved to be a particularly valued experience for the members who went.

The Lord Provost of Edinburgh hosted a civic reception for members at the City Chambers to mark the Centenary, and our celebrations culminated with a special event hosted by our President, the Duke of Buccleuch, to celebrate the Centenary and at the same time open the Centenary Hall and new housing at Linburn.
Marketing and External Relations

Our marketing and PR aim is to attract new members who can benefit from the charity’s services. Our marketing team worked especially hard this year on the Centenary programme.

A PR and community engagement campaign was launched in the West of Scotland to raise awareness of our new centre in Paisley. A competition was held in Paisley Central Library to name the building.

We exhibited at all Armed Forces days in Scotland and held an open day at the Linburn Centre as part of Age Scotland’s Luminate programme.
Plans for the Future

We have purchased a former garden centre site in Hawkhead Road, Paisley, on which we are constructing a new centre to make available to our members in the West of Scotland the kind of activities and support that we provide in the Linburn Centre for those in the East. The design process has had significant input from both staff and members at Linburn. The centre will be similar in the size and range of its facilities to the existing Linburn Centre, including the Centenary Hall.

The Linburn Centre will undergo some internal alterations shortly, now that some of its functions have moved into the Centenary Hall. We will enlarge both the IT suite and the central hub of the centre where meals are served. We then plan to look into ways to use the other areas of the site to benefit our members and enhance the Linburn estate.

Our outreach service will be further enhanced by the addition to our staff of a Rehabilitation Worker who will cover the whole of Scotland.
Financial Review

Total income, at £3.1 million, increased by 41% from the previous financial year, due to a large rise in income from donations and legacies. We were especially grateful to receive a legacy of £501,000 from the late Mrs Margaret Moyes. Investment income remained the largest element (just over half) of total income, decreasing by 5% from the previous year.

The profile of our expenditure continues to change as a result of the continuing growth of services to members, particularly the outreach service, which with the growth of its provision of equipment increased its expenditure by 30%. The Linburn Centre’s expenditure grew by 16% while the cost of our financial support to members was 9% less than in the previous year.

Our net result before investment and pension gains and losses was, at a deficit of only £106,000, or 3% of expenditure, close to a break-even position. Our aim is to put our very large reserves to use gradually by operating at a deficit, and once we have the Hawkhead centre in Paisley operating we will be on target to do so.

This year saw a downturn in world stock markets, giving us holding losses on our investment portfolio of £4.9 million in the year, unfortunately nullifying the gains we reported in the previous two years.

The balance sheet shows growth in tangible fixed assets from the construction of the Centenary Hall and houses at Linburn and our acquisition of the site in Paisley, and a decrease in our investments, partly because of the losses referred to above and partly through our having disposed of investments to fund our projects. A sum of £6 million has been set aside as a designated fund for the construction of the Hawkhead Centre, and we retain a very strong reserve to fund our future activities.
### Summarised Statement of Financial Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income:</th>
<th>2015/16 £000</th>
<th>2014/15 £000</th>
<th>Increase (Decrease)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donations and legacies</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>224%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net investment income</td>
<td>1,597</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let property</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,060</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,176</strong></td>
<td><strong>41%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linburn Centre</td>
<td>1,263</td>
<td>1,087</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach and member services</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let Property</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support to members</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>1,033</td>
<td>(9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to other charities</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,166</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,784</strong></td>
<td><strong>14%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net expenditure before investment gains</th>
<th>(106)</th>
<th>(608)</th>
<th>(83%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments gains/(losses)</td>
<td>(4,911)</td>
<td>3,052</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actuarial loss on pension scheme</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(224)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net movement in funds</strong></td>
<td><strong>(5,026)</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,220</strong></td>
<td><strong>(326%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Summarised Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>31 Mar 2016 £000</th>
<th>31 Mar 2015 £000</th>
<th>Increase (Decrease)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible fixed assets</td>
<td>9,254</td>
<td>5,733</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>49,927</td>
<td>58,035</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>59,181</strong></td>
<td><strong>63,768</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less - Current Liabilities</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Current assets</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>(63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets excluding pension liability</td>
<td>59,428</td>
<td>64,431</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension liability</td>
<td>(245)</td>
<td>(222)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
<td>59,183</td>
<td>64,209</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Represented by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>31 Mar 2016 £000</th>
<th>31 Mar 2015 £000</th>
<th>Increase (Decrease)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General unrestricted Funds</td>
<td>53,183</td>
<td>57,249</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Funds</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,960</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Funds</td>
<td>59,183</td>
<td>64,209</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The designated fund is for our new centre in Paisley
Patron
His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, K.G., G.C.V.O.

President
His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.B.E.

Vice President and Chairman of the Council
The Reverend J.M. Shields M.B.E., L.Th.

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Dawn Burrows*  Michelle McWilliams  Sandra Warburton
Michael Craig  James Milhench
Patsy Gillies*  Robert Mooney

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Commander 51st Infantry Brigade, the Army
Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, Royal Navy
Air Officer Scotland, the Royal Air Force
Deputy Assistant Chaplain General, Army HQ, 51st Infantry Brigade
Group Captain (rtd.) Philip Cox, Chief Executive, Scottish Veterans Residences*
Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL, Chairman, Veterans Scotland*
Derek McDonald*
The Trustees

* Denotes member of the War Blinded Committee, of which the convener is David Johnston
Chief Executive and Secretary
Richard G Hellewell, BA Econ FCA

Auditor
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