

Chairs report 2025

The past year has been successful for VI Talk. All Facebook groups have continued to grow and our presence across other social media platforms has grown. The only thing that has changed is that we took the decision to leave X or Twitter. We didn't feel that it was serving us in any significant way and after watching some other VI charities leave, we discussed leaving and decided that concentrating on the other platforms would serve us best.

We have continued to offer weekly Zoom chats for peer support and friendship and we were lucky enough to receive funding from The Ulverscroft Trust to cover another year of QiGong and Wellbeing sessions. Our popular book group still meet on the last Monday to discuss the monthly suggestion.

In March 2024 we ran our first dance weekend and the feedback was so lovely and positive that we decided to do it all again. This wouldn't be possible without Jeanie who gives up her time to support everyone. Some of the comments from last year "Jeanie has the patience of a saint." "I've done something that I never thought I'd ever do." Jeanie doesn't just rock up and teach these weekends. There are weeks if not months of planning as to which dances would be suitable. I'm the guinea pig who spends many hours being put through my paces. There is a lot of laughter. In October 2024 we ran our first wellbeing weekend, offering QiGong, meditation, a sound bath, restorative Yoga, a seafront walk and some reflexology and hand massage for those who wanted it. Funding from TPT enabled us to run this weekend. We know that people would like breaks in other areas of the country but the wonderful Cliffden volunteers make it possible for us to provide these weekends. We are very grateful to Jules who coordinates the volunteers and to the volunteers themselves who I'm sure some of whom never envisaged dancing round the summer house. We are always open to new ideas for our weekend breaks.

Sam has continued as treasurer but does much more than look after the money. Sam admins all groups and schedules for Instagram. She is one of the Zoom facilitators and sometimes covers other Zoom sessions. Sam has become adept at updating our website as well. Considering she came to the team claiming to be hugely untechy, she has amazed us all and herself. Sam also fights with Mail Chimp every month to make sure our newsletter goes out to the mailing list. As the only member of the trustee team

with some sight, Sam is a great support to us all. Sam is also one of our first aiders and I'm sure she will agree with me when I say we are extremely glad that we have never had to put our skills into practice.

Lacey has become our secretary and takes the minutes at our bimonthly meetings. She also admins all groups and facilitates Zoom chats. Lacey is a supportive member of the team and is quite often the one who goes off to research things like DBS checks for the team. As the youngest trustee, Lacey's thoughts and opinions are greatly beneficial. Sam and Lacey also help me with emails, answering queries, ploughing through funding possibilities and posting info to FB.

Kaukub and Kay are our newest trustees but have met the challenges with professionalism and enthusiasm. They both admin groups and recently Kay has been checking out Blue Sky as an alternative to X. Kay volunteers for her local sight loss charity and Kaukub works as a social worker. They both bring lots of skills to the board of trustees. Kay also schedules across social media.

As well as the trustees we obviously have our lovely team of volunteers. Dawn has continued to volunteer after leaving the board and facilitates most of the QiGong and wellbeing sessions with Pat. Dawn records the QiGong classes for me to put on our Audio Boom channel so that more blind and partially sighted people can get the benefit from this gentle mindful movement. Marie puts together our monthly newsletter. Maxine creates the social media planner for the team. Helen teaches crochet on Zoom several times a week.

Michael our only male member of the team facilitates Zoom chats but is a source of tech support for me when I need it. Jane stepped down from the board due to personal reasons but is hoping to continue to volunteer helping with some of our fundraising. Jane has described VI Talk as small but mighty and I think this is true.

The team give their time for free and often work well into the evening to make sure people are supported.

We have decided to continue to run 2 face to face events each year and later this year we hope to run an arts and crafts weekend at Cliffden with a festive theme. It thanks again to Thomas Pocklington Trust that we can provide these events.

We do also run quizzes throughout the year and before Christmas teamed with St Vincent's past pupils association to run a festive quiz. These are always hugely popular and this year we're planning

a battle of the specialist schools, where a team from as many VI schools past and present will join a quiz night to see who wins. Sadly our festive market didn't go ahead last year but it is my hope that with some forward planning that it will be resurrected this year. This raises funds for VI Talk but also offers the chance for small business owners who are mostly visually impaired to showcase their wares. It's a lovely way to approach the festive period. I say this every year but I am as always proud of the team who work tirelessly to break down social isolation, provide information and create a safe and supportive environment for blind and partially sighted people, their families and friends. We are a tiny charity with no paid staff. Some of us have other jobs, voluntary roles and families to support but we still meet the challenges with compassion and empathy every day of the year.

VI TALK Financial Report End of Year Summary 16th

February 2025

Balance Brought Forward from 2023/2024	£9,240.43
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INCOME FOR 2024/2025

Donations (various sources)	£ 587.00
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GRANTS

Thomas Pocklington Trust	£3,180.00
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Ulverscroft Trust	£ 540.00
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TOTAL INCOME FOR 2024/2025 **£4,307.00**

EXPENDITURE FOR 2024/2025

Equipment (PA SYSTEM)	£ 169.99
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Website	£ 444.00
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Domain Name	£	36.00
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Audio Boom	£	94.80
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Buffer	£ 249.66
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Zoom Licence (X2)	£ 311.76
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VI TALK Phone top up	£	40.00
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Travel	£ 158.20
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Accommodation	£ 831.98
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Trustee expenses	£ 104.88
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Dance weekend (Lunch)	£ 517.40
Wellbeing weekend (Lunch)	£ 455.95
Wellbeing weekend expenses	£ 130.00
Wellbeing Zoom meetings	£ 540.00
Festive Quiz Prize	£ 6.20
Public Liability Insurance	£ 123.20
<u>TOTAL EXPENCES FOR 2024/2025</u>	<u>£4,214.02</u>
 <u>Balance carried forward to 2025/2026</u>	 <u>£9,333.41</u>