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ANNUAL REVIEW 2011-12

My first year as Chair of Catholic Blind Institute produced an overwhelming message - THANK YOU: to friends, staff, trustees and everyone else with a real interest in what we do. This isn't the only message, though. I also want to say WELL DONE and on this there is much to say.

St Vincent's School is again rated "Outstanding" by OfSTED. Particularly telling is the following comment: *'St Vincent's is an outstanding school. Parents and carers are completely confident that the school is meeting the needs of their children exceptionally well. Staff in all settings are proud to work at the school and pupils are absolutely clear that they love coming to school.'*

So it's hard to say goodbye to Steve Roberts who, after eight years as Principal, will retire in spring. He has led St Vincent's on a tremendous journey of development to unparalleled success. THANK YOU, we wish him the very best. Pupils, parents and governors form the base of the school community alongside the dedicated staff: I include them all in saying WELL DONE. We remain committed to the future of St Vincent's and the process to find a replacement principal has commenced.

Christopher Grange had a really positive year led by Lesley Colby, supported by Ann Lloyd and Julie Greene, continually improving services for those living there.

Sr Patricia's arrival maintains our close association with the Daughters of Charity. It is greatly welcomed and the pastoral service she leads adds quality to the lives of all who live, work and visit us.

The Visual Rehabilitation Centre provides vital support to people suffering sight-loss but also to others. Mike Bailey and team continue to innovate and seek new income for our service. This year saw a new relationship with Delta Taxis and with the University of Liverpool, School of Medicine. Medical students and drivers are trained to better support those suffering sight-loss. Feedback received is excellent.

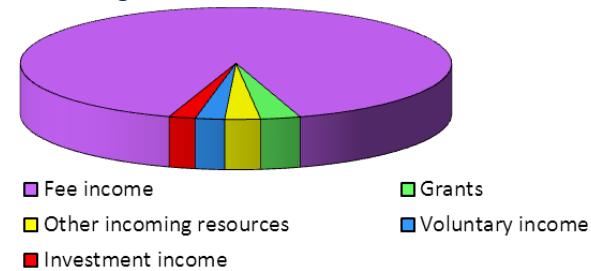
THANK YOU to all our staff and volunteers including my fellow trustees who spend many hours supporting the work we do with wisdom and good humour. THANK YOU must also go to our Fundraising Team for which we have great hopes in 2013. The external pressures on our charity continue. We need to constantly think of new ways to raise funds to support our work. Any help that you can give will be very welcome. Legacy income is vital to us. It remains low but we are enormously THANKFUL to those who remember us.

Special THANKS go to Monsignor Dick Atherton who is to retire as a trustee. In a decade Dick has made an immeasurable contribution to the spiritual life of our charity and we shall greatly miss him.

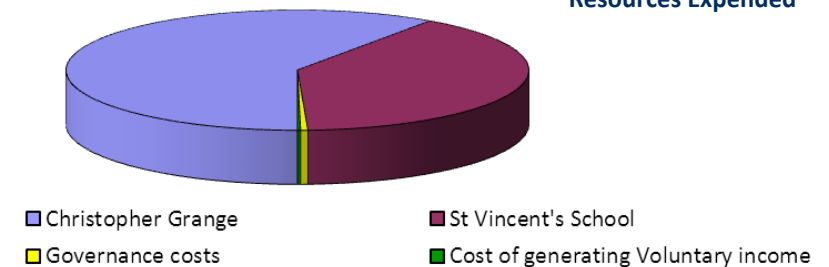
2013 brings fresh challenges. We shall continue to focus on the needs and aspirations of those we work for and with. We will look to develop strong partnerships in Liverpool, increase our marketing to raise our profile and look at ways to increase our reach and our social impact.

WELL DONE and THANK YOU to all.
Anne Reading, Chair

Incoming Resources



Resources Expended



2011-2012

Beneficiaries	
Christopher Grange - Residents	101
Visual Rehabilitation Centre - Students	51
St Vincent's School - Pupils	38
Number of Employees	
Christopher Grange	141
Visual Rehabilitation Centre	10
St Vincent's School	51
CBI	5
Volunteers	
Christopher Grange	0
Visual Rehabilitation Centre	16
St Vincent's School	10

These abridged financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2012 are a summary of the full audited accounts approved by the Board of Trustees of Catholic Blind Institute for submission to the Charities Commission and Registrar of Companies.



	2012	2011
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Fee income	3,993,150	3,966,863
Grants	131,428	168,672
Other incoming resources	117,765	191,085
Voluntary income	96,933	197,915
Investment income	87,682	84,288
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	4,426,958	4,608,823
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Christopher Grange	2,766,959	2,840,818
St Vincent's School	1,834,007	1,846,985
Governance costs	23,041	20,754
Cost of generating Voluntary income	10,199	10,162
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	4,634,206	4,718,719
OPERATING DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	(207,248)	(109,896)
Other losses	(81,885)	136,940
NET MOVEMENT OF FUNDS	(289,133)	27,044
Funds brought forward	5,901,453	5,874,409
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2012	5,612,320	5,901,453

Despite the best efforts of our dedicated and committed employees, our charity continues to struggle to make financial ends meet. We can report that our School is rated "outstanding" according to the service it delivers. We can be aware that Christopher Grange provides the highest standards of care and a happy and care-free environment for our residents. We can be proud of the services delivered through our rehabilitation of those suffering sight loss in later life and our teaching of those who provide services to the blind and partially sighted. However, if we cannot provide the financial resources to meet our obligations to those we employ and the other expenses incurred in provision of our services, those services will eventually suffer or cease altogether.

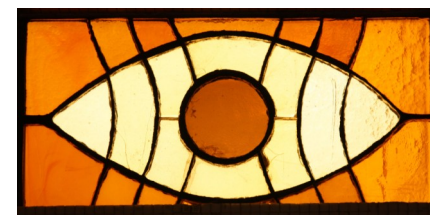
The trustees are acutely aware of our responsibilities in that regard. We are very grateful to all our employees but, without referring by name to particular individuals, I want particularly here to express grateful thanks to those who work so tirelessly in ensuring that we maximise the income of the charity and spend only what we have to. 'Balancing the books' is an on-going and often thankless task. It is, however, essential that the trustees express their gratitude to all those involved, whether in fund raising, managing departmental budgets, ordering and authorising payment for goods and services or involved in the more general financial management of the charity.

We are most grateful to you all.

Our losses are £207,000 at the operating level for the year ended 31 March 2012. They would be considerably worse if it were not for our investment income and other receipts that are not payment for services. In this age of 'austerity' the charity continues to explore new ways to diversify and increase the income of the charity. However, we must again recognise that the prudent savings of those who have gone before us, which allowed the setting up of a safety net of investments, is largely keeping our charity afloat. The struggle continues to obtain appropriate fees from local councils for those residents placed in care with us. The same struggle is perhaps more keenly felt by some parents who attempt to take advantage of our "outstanding" school by placing their children at St. Vincent's.

After more than 170 years of providing services to those in need, our charity can be justly proud of its heritage. May God continue to bless our work and the people connected with us.

Paul Robbins
General Secretary and
Honorary Treasurer



The academic year 2011-2012 proved to be another successful year for the school, culminating in a joint Ofsted Care and Education inspection that found the school to be 'outstanding', in all areas. This is a considerable achievement since our last joint Care and Education inspection in 2008 which also found us 'outstanding', as the bar has been raised considerably since then and a more exacting rigour has been applied. As a school community we are justifiably proud of this and grateful for all of the support that we receive from parents, guardians, pupils, trustees and governors in supporting us to achieve this high accolade.

The Ofsted inspectors were most impressed with the day and residential curriculum that we offered to our pupils and how we continually sought to improve and develop the provision that we offer. An area that we are currently seeking to develop is that of a 19-25, in response to requests from families that currently have children at the school and others that left some years ago.

Our curriculum links with the neighbouring schools of St Oswald's, Broughton Hall, St Edwards and Cardinal Heenan continue to bear fruit and provide enrichment for both our and their pupils. These links continue to be developed through our participation in the West Derby Network Learning Community, which places St Vincent's at the heart of the educational community in West Derby. In addition to supporting the training of teachers in the mandatory qualification for visual impairment we

have also developed further links with Hope University and the training and development of some of their students. This raises student awareness of disability and introduces them to the potential of a career route. We also have long standing links with Edge Hill University.

A rich 24 hour curriculum is provided to those pupils who access the residential provision of the school. This led to two of our residents competing in a number of Rock Climbing competitions which in turn led to them competing in the first international rock climbing competition, for those with vision impairment, in Paris in September 2012. Both girls accounted for themselves very well and came in the top ten.



The arrival of Tom Hall as Community Fundraising Officer has greatly enhanced both the fundraising and a raised profile of our work locally. The diary is rapidly becoming filled with supermarket bag-packs and collections, charity concerts, golf tournaments and involvements with local schools, sports clubs, youth groups and local associations. Not only have we an increasing involvement but we are looking to expand considerably in these areas with the recruitment of volunteers keen to help. Basically, we need your help so don't be slow in coming forward. There are so many interesting and fulfilling things you can do to help. Help us put the "fun" in fundraising!

Alongside these activities we continue to have success with grant applications and are expanding our bids to fit with defined and fully budgeted projects rather than just one-off requests for single pieces of equipment. We are grateful to the staff for their efforts in putting together the information we need to be successful with these bid applications. For example, though it was at very short notice, we were successful in obtaining funding for the newly devised Summer Camps at St Vincent's for VI children on Merseyside. These not only provided recreational activities for our own children during the summer holidays, but also attracted other VI children and their parents making them aware of our fantastic facilities and care provision.

The monthly 50:50 Draw continues. What more reason could you have to get involved other than, this month (September), the first prize is more than £100 for the first time. Again, our raised profile in the local community is expected to raise participation, and hence income and prizes, in this scheme even further. Leaflets are available in the reception area at both St Vincent's and Christopher Grange. To, once again, utilise the old catch phrase – "You've got to be in it to Win it!"

All donations in support of our work are most welcome and further information of the tax giving advantages of Gift Aid alongside the Internet based "Easy Fundraising" and "Just Giving" schemes, are available. We would be more than happy to talk through the tax advantages to yourself and how a Charitable Bequest in your Will could help secure the future of the charity. Please don't hesitate to contact us on any matter. Our role is to help, encourage and support anyone prepared to help us by participation in whatever! In these increasingly difficult times, we do need your charitable support to enable us to maintain and continue the very best of care to our service users.

To achieve this, we need a team effort by all.

If you would like to help us or want to volunteer, our fundraising team is waiting to hear from you by e-mail to davidpoppitt@catholicblindinstitute.org or on 0151 230 5097.

50:50 CLUB

Membership forms are available now.

Christopher Grange Visual Rehabilitation Centre

Christopher Grange Rehabilitation Centre continues to provide a vital service to visually impaired adults from across the North West region, through a unique form of centre-based rehabilitation tailored to the individual needs of our service users.



The bespoke Visual Impairment Awareness Training sessions delivered to Delta Taxis and University of Liverpool Medical School have "opened the eyes" of employees and students from these organisations to the difficulties facing our service users. The feedback is excellent. We are aiming to offer this service more widely in the future. 100% of students would recommend the placement as the comment below indicates:

"Told us things that were relevant to us as future doctors to ensure we consider all aspects of a person's care"

We continue to collaborate with all the relevant agencies and organisations and are forging new business relationships with both the private and public sector.

Comments posted on our promotional film now showing on YouTube.

*"It's inspiring to think how deeply services like this can touch a person's life. A great service provided by wonderful staff, producing life changing results..
Congratulations Christopher Grange"*

"My time at Christopher Grange has been like a life saving experience"

"The peer support is unbelievable"

"The support you get is fantastic"

Did you know?

74% of our team, including our volunteers, are registered visually impaired.

"It just makes you feel, there is light at the end of the tunnel"



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At Christmas we had the High Sheriff of Merseyside and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool visit us for our Christmas concert, they were most impressed with what they saw and the range of ability displayed by the pupils. The summer term finished off with a concert to celebrate the Olympics and Paralympics which was equally successful, with two Olympic torches in attendance. It was a very special afternoon for everybody. As part of our preparations for this we had a Sports Relief Fund Raising day when we were joined with staff from Capita. Our pupils are often the beneficiaries of fundraising and we believe that it is an important part of their life experience, that they too can give to others. It was a most successful day.



A day that the pupils most enjoyed this year was 'Takeover Day'. On this day the pupils took over the running of the school and they did a very good job indeed. A number of our pupils sit on the Liverpool school Parliament and activities such as this give them real life experience, in a safe environment to develop not only their citizenship skills but an understanding of responsibility and accountability.

'He entered the school as an anxious, unhappy, miserable child unable to do much. He is now happy, confident and the school is making the best of his abilities. A life saver/changer. Marvellous.'

Reported by a parent to Ofsted June 2012

'She settled very quickly as a resident and has a brilliant support network; she adores school there is always someone at the end of a phone.'

Parental quote

'You have a very special atmosphere, if only we could bottle it up and release the spirit of St Vincent's in more schools I am sure we would see more happy and settled pupils.'

Visiting professional

'We just wanted to say a huge thank you for your help and support on Monday. It was a long day and your input was invaluable. We really appreciate the help and support and realise you both went beyond your call of duty.'

Parental Quote

The St Vincent's Old Pupils Association (SVOPA) once again hosted their annual conference at the school and have also booked the facility 2013. We share good relations with this organization and continue to explore other means by which they can act as ambassadors for our school. Those using our conferencing facilities always comment on the high quality of provision available at the school and the delightful environment.



As the Country has celebrated events and achievements during the past year Christopher Grange Residents have travelled on the journey with them!

In advance of the celebrations in London for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Christopher Grange was decorated for the event. As the Pageant on the Thames took place residents watched and celebrated with a 'champagne afternoon tea'. These celebrations continued through into the following week with a street party in the Market Place and other topical events to mark this important occasion.

Throughout the summer months the Olympic and Paralympic Games have been part of so many people's lives including the residents at Christopher Grange. As these incredible people have achieved their success we have watched and listened, cheered them on their way, and also shed a few tears. Our Olympics here were on a much smaller scale however competitors were cheered and medals were awarded.

In December last year we were delighted to welcome Sister Patricia to Christopher Grange. She replaced Sister Esther as Head of Pastoral Services and has been joined by Sister Brenda. This 'Community' of ladies provide us with such a valuable service; they are an important part of what Christopher Grange and its ethos and heritage is all about.



Despite the poor weather throughout the summer residents from all our Units have had the opportunity to visit New Brighton. For those unable to go out in the minibus the sea-side came to them here at Christopher Grange, they were able to enjoy candy-floss, rock, ice cream and fish and chips whilst donning their handkerchief head coverings and sunglasses to protect them from the 'great British weather'.

This year also marks a milestone in the history of Christopher Grange. 40 years ago on 27th August 1972 85 visually impaired older people, 12 Sisters and staff moved from Brunswick Road into the newly built Christopher Grange. The building was officially opened on 12th October by Cardinal Heenan.

We will be celebrating this Anniversary on 17th October when a Celebratory Mass will be held here in the Chapel followed by refreshments and entertainment.

Liverpool Museum

We were delighted to be offered the chance to be part of an initiative being run by the new Liverpool Museum offering our residents the opportunity to have guided and assisted tours of the venue and its exhibits. Many of the residents chose to visit over the course of a few months and subsequently Ken Taylor who runs the guided tours visited Christopher Grange with his 'Reminiscence Box' to talk with some of the Residents who were not well enough to visit.

Frances's 100th Birthday

Ken made a further visit to talk with Frances Stringfellow who resides in Greenside about her years employed as a midwife at Mill Road Maternity Hospital. He hopes to use this information as part of one of the exhibits. Frances incidentally will be celebrating her 100th birthday at Christopher Grange in November.

