

Walthew House

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

A year of achievements and making a difference to people in Stockport with a sight and/or hearing loss



WHO ARE WE?

Walthew House is a **charity** providing practical and emotional support for people in Stockport with **sight or hearing loss**.

The charity was **founded in 1882** and is named after its founder John Walthew, a former Mayor of Stockport, whose daughter was blind and deaf.



We are a small independent charity with just **7 members of staff** and a team of more than **80 volunteers** from the local community.

We receive **no contracted income** and rely on **donations, local fundraising and grants** from organisations such as charitable trusts.

We are located in **Shaw Heath**, Stockport.



Prevalence of sight and hearing loss in **Stockport**:

10,500 people living with sight loss

(expected to increase by 15% by 2032)

41,800 people living with hearing loss

(3,200 people are severely/profoundly Deaf)

2,020 people living with dual sensory loss

(790 with severe dual sensory loss)

Sources: RNIB Sight Loss Data Tool (version 5.2, March 2023) and Stockport JSNA Digest - Disability (Dec 2007)

WHAT DO WE DO?

We **support 400+ local people each week** through our range of services for both adults and young people.



Regular **social groups** (which help to reduce social isolation)



A **Resource Centre** demonstrating and selling equipment and tech for people with a sensory loss



Our weekly sensory loss **Youth Club** and annual residential trip



Training courses, such as lip-reading and British Sign Language (BSL)



Sporting and activity groups, both on-site and in the community in Stockport



Specialist one-to-one sight loss **counselling** (face-to-face and/or telephone)



Advocacy services provided by our qualified staff in BSL to support our local D/deaf community



Accessible information service to remove barriers for people with sensory loss

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



543

social group and activity sessions held



147

sight loss counselling sessions held



416

Deaf people received advocacy support



5 - 90

is the age range of our current service users



220

people attended training sessions



102

volunteers supported delivery of our services



208,000

people were reached across social media



73

fundraising activities and events held



11

groups and partnership orgs. use our facilities



255

local people utilised our community Warm Space

OUR WEEKLY SUPPORT

During 2022/23, Walthew House provided support to **more than 400 individuals every week**,
in **more than 600 weekly interventions**.



200+

individuals attended our centre in Shaw Heath or our community-based social and sporting groups and activities each week.



60+

individuals accessed equipment and technology each week through our not-for-profit specialist Resource Centre.

125+

individuals supported on average each week with accessible information, in Braille, large print, audio and British Sign Language.



80+

individuals accessed our other services each week, including sight loss counselling, training sessions and 1:1 support.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



We were the nominated charity for the Stockport Beer and Cider Festival in June, taking place at Edgeley Park.

The event helped us to raise £5,931 for Walthew House and we were also able to raise awareness of our services to our local community.

We hosted the 'Walthew House Proms' here in July, which included a special performance by our sensory loss steel band, as well as an opportunity for our service users to join in with singing, dancing and flag waving. Everyone enjoyed this musical event!



We worked collaboratively with Manchester Deaf Centre and Bolton Deaf Society to consult on 'What D/deaf People Want.' The key findings were published in a report in September and shared with our wider community in face-to-face feedback sessions.

Our Youth Club and Monday Social group took part in a project with Arriva UK and the Arc Centre Stockport to create a collage for a digital panel at Stockport train station, depicting how people with sight and hearing loss see their home town.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



We held our 'Breakfast with Signing Santa' event in December, enabling children with sensory loss to communicate with Santa in British Sign Language. This popular family event was fully inclusive and enjoyed by everyone who attended, including siblings.

We were honoured to welcome the new Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester here in January, who is continuing the tradition by becoming President of Walthew House. During her visit, she had a guided tour and a short lesson on how to play the steel drums.



Following a 30-month pilot project with Walthew House, Stepping Hill Hospital have taken over our Hospital Information Officer onto their payroll, increasing the number of hours of the service, and assuring the continuance of this valuable support in the community.

We welcomed Margaret Young and Jennie Thompson here in March, all the way from Australia! Margaret and Jennie are related to John Walthew's wife, Mary, and they have been tracing their family history. They really enjoyed their tour of our building.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE



Our classes and activities are **fully inclusive** for people who might struggle to attend mainstream groups because of their sight or hearing loss, providing entertainment, information and peer support. We **remove barriers** to communication to **combat digital exclusion** and a lack of understanding of the need for information to be provided in the user's preferred format.

Providing information in accessible formats helps to ensure people with sight or hearing loss can have **equity of access** to health and social care support, and **up to date information** on other services and support.



We have **worked closely with other organisations** to effect change, including Stockport Council's Sensory Service, Stepping Hill Hospital, and Healthwatch Stockport, as well as local care homes, schools and businesses.

Looking ahead, we are continuing to focus on projects which will facilitate **early intervention, outreach** and **improving accessibility**. We will continue to promote our 'no wrong door' approach to ensuring access to the full range of support provided by Walthew House, facilitating a co-ordinated service which is comprehensive, dynamic and actively inclusive, in line with our charity's core values of **Responsive - Effective - Supportive - Trusted**.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE



"No words can express our **heartfelt gratitude** for not only your most **professional guidance**, but the caring, welcoming warmth displayed by you all! Without you we genuinely do not know where we would be." - Anon, service user

"Really **enjoyed the course**, and in particular the 'what works for you' session, and talking to other sight impaired people." - Anon, course attendee

"Ella had such a fantastic day and it has **given her a boost** to realise that she can still do things, regardless of her disability!" - Louise, parent of child with sight loss

"It's such a help having Walthew House there to support me. It **reduces my anxiety** as they are able to translate things for me and then we can respond together, without me having to wait ages for an appointment or miss a deadline. I am happy this service is there for the Deaf community." - Anon, service user



"We have learnt so much about how we can provide **emotional and practical support** to our Deaf resident, just by being able to communicate with him effectively. This was a **fantastic opportunity** for colleagues and myself, I think it should be something more homes across the UK take part in."

- Melissa, Newlands Care Home Manager

RAISING AWARENESS

Raising awareness of the needs of people with sensory loss continues to be an important part of our work, ensuring lasting relationships are maintained with our community, reaching more people directly and supporting early intervention.



We have delivered **awareness talks and presentations** to local companies and organisations, as diverse as Wigan Athletic Football Club and Poynton High School, as well as community groups, local philanthropic organisations and care homes.



We have attended **community events** to raise our profile, including Stockport Pride, Emergency Services Open Day, and the local Rotary Club Duck Race, where the Walthew House steel band performed. We also held our **blind tenpin bowling** competition, which involved 17 teams from across the community as well as the Mayor of Stockport.



We have worked collaboratively with local organisations to **promote public health messages, identify gaps** in service provision, **promote accessibility, support complaints** made by people with sensory loss, and encourage **information sharing..**



HOW TO SUPPORT US



Our charity relies on donations and local fundraising to be able to provide our services, and we really appreciate the support of our local community.

There are a number of ways you can make a donation to us:

- Pay by debit or credit card at www.walthewhouse.org.uk/donate or call us on **0161 480 2612**
- Make a cheque payable to Walthew House and post to us here at **Walthew House, 112 Shaw Heath, Stockport, SK2 6QS**
- Or bring your donations to us at our address on weekdays 9am - 4pm.

How could your donation help us?

- **£5 could pay for** expenses for one of our volunteers to support people with accessible aids and technology in our not-for-profit Resource Centre.
- **£10 could pay for** refreshments for up to 30 people at one of our weekly social groups.
- **£20 could pay for** one hour of support from our qualified independent advocates.





THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has supported Walthew House over the last year, and made such a difference to the lives of so many individuals living with sight and/or hearing loss.

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