

Croydon  
**Vision**

Changing how we **SEE**



**From Despair  
to Independence**



**Strategic Plan 2020-2023**

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## Foreword from the CEO and Chair

"Over the past year, Croydon Vision has transformed as an organisation. We've galvanised to improve the lives of our members like never before. So far, we've broadened our appeal to **all age groups** and have extended our reach to **Croydon's wider community**. We've begun the work to improve communications, deepen community engagement, and develop new strategic partnerships. We've increased diversity of membership, built a stronger Board, launched new employment initiatives, and increased number of volunteers with relevant experience. We continue to invest time and resources on team development. But we know there's more to be done...

### We need to act fast.

Croydon's current population stands at 384,837 and is estimated to increase by 14% by 2031. Over 51% of this community identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME). **Our local ethnic diversity, means that the prevalence of certain eye conditions such as glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy are disproportionately high.**

9,420 people are currently living with some degree of sight loss in Croydon. There's an estimated risk for sight loss to rise further; Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is estimated at 12,440 - early stages, 7,430 people are living with diabetes, putting them at risk of developing diabetic eye disease. Glaucoma is on the rise; 3,390 caused by fluid building up in the front part of the eye; that can lead to sight loss.

Our strategic plan to tackle this issue in our community has been borne out of a year's worth of work, consulting with our members, volunteers, staff and external stakeholders. **We've worked together to establish our values** and steer organisational change in a direction that will make a real difference. While we continue to fulfill our operational plans, we remain determined to **support, enable and empower people with sight loss to live fulfilled and happy lives.**

The Croydon Vision Team, including members, the board, volunteers and staff, could not be more excited to implement our strategic plans right now...



**Frances Cullen**  
Chair



**Susanette Mansour**  
Chief Executive

## This is a call to action; changing more lives from despair to living independently – how?

**Coproduction** – our members to actively shape service development

**Community** – improving our reach and engagement in Croydon

**Accessibility** – transforming our premises and improving technology usage

**Holistic Health** – putting our members at the centre of their care pathways

**Sustainable Reach** – improving our brand, communications and income stream

**Imagine what is possible by changing how we SEE...**



Croydon Vision is  
here to **empower.**








## We've been doing this since 1923....

When the Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind (known as Croydon Vision) was formed there were limited opportunities for blind and partially sighted people. The world has changed a lot since then but at our core we still hold the same belief that those living with sight loss should be able to do so with independence and confidence. Croydon Vision is all about helping our members, young and old, to live rich, fulfilled lives.

## A vibrant community.

It's free to become a Croydon Vision member, and our members and their families/ carers can take advantage of a range of free and low cost services and activities such as:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  Information & Advice |  Low Vision Clinic     |  Outreach Service |
|  Route to Employment  |  Sight Loss Workshops  |  Tech Training    |
|  Transport & Lunch    |  Various Social Groups |  Get Creative     |

What we do is as varied as it is stimulating, because fostering confidence and personal development is at the heart of everything we do.

## What our members say...



"It is good to see service development for working age as well as the children and young people. There is now more emphasis on reaching out to the wider community and making it more streamlined and professional to members and professionals alike."

**Anna**

"Croydon Vision is not a building, it's the people within the building."

**Claire**

"Croydon Vision brings people with sight loss together, it gives companionship. It changed my life! Instead of standing still after sight loss diagnosis, Croydon Vision allowed me to progress and move forward."

**Brian**

# Croydon Vision is here to make a real difference.

## Working with the Croydon community.

We're proud to work with people of all ages. Though sight loss can be associated with older members of the community, empowering and advocating for young people who are living with sight loss can change the trajectory of their lives. As such we tailor our services and activities to our members' ages and individual needs. We categorise age groups as follows:



**Children & Young People**  
(3-13, 14-18years)



**Working Age**  
(19 years plus)



**Over 65**

We want to champion inclusion in everything we do, so we do operate small fleet of vehicles to help our members travel and connect with each other. Our targeted outreach program, complemented by our transportation provision, offers key support to sight loss individuals and their families/carers, with a keen focus on residents who have previously been unable to access support. Financial constraints mean we cannot get to all of the wards within Croydon, so we operate a robust and fully accessible community hub at Bedford Hall, which is open to all.

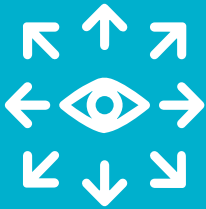


**OUR MISSION:** What drives us.

We're here to encourage independence, confidence and personal development among the blind and partially sighted community of Croydon.

**OUR VISION:** What we do.

We work to continually enhance the quality of life for blind and visually impaired people of all ages, as well as their families/carers, by providing high quality services.

**OUR VALUES:** The tools we use.**Awareness - Flexible to enhance efficiency**

The people we work with face a whole range of different challenges, each of which demands a different response. We have to be agile to effect change.

**Compassion - Always ready to take action**

We approach problem-solving and empowerment with empathy, without that our efforts will make minimal difference.

**Teamwork - Together we achieve more**

By sharing skills, energy, expertise and experience, we know we can do more, so we work together to make things better for our members and their families/carers.

**Integrity - Always do the right thing**

We're steadfast in our commitment to making a real difference to real people.

**Diversity - Each person is unique**

We're here for all ages and backgrounds, our diversity is a fundamental part of what makes our community special.

# There are three branches to our work...

1



We work directly with people affected by sight loss in a number of different ways. Providing quality information, advice, advocacy, tech training and counselling services are invaluable in helping blind and partially sighted people to thrive, in spite of their sight loss. We also combat the isolation and powerlessness that can come hand in hand with visual impairment, by facilitating peer support groups and recreational activities.

2



It isn't just blind and partially sighted people that we work with. By informing and educating carers, family members, employers and the public about the challenges faced by blind and partially sighted people, we're gradually helping to change perceptions.

3



We don't operate in a bubble. Working with Moorfields, GPs, optical professionals, sensory impairment team, local and national voluntary organisations means the provision available for our members in Croydon is joined-up and timely.

**Croydon Vision is here to serve the community.**



## Sight loss is a growing problem.

Sight loss charities like ours recognise that the demographics of sight loss are changing. Indeed, Croydon Vision members have begun to present with increasingly complex needs in recent years, conditions relating to strokes and diabetes add to the number of people who experience age related sight-loss. Support services also continue to be stretched by the fact that sight-loss can often coincide with dementia in the elderly, and learning disabilities in children.

**2,500,000**

By 2050, 3.5 million people will live with sight loss (up from the current 2.5 million). The cost to the UK economy will be £33.5 billion by 2050 (up from £25.2 billion at present).

**350,000**

About **350,000 UK residents** are registered as blind or partially sighted.

**25,000**

Somewhere in the region of **25,000 children** aged 16 and under are registered as blind or partially sighted.

**£25.2 billion**

That's the current cost of sight loss in the UK today. This figure includes:

- 🕒 Preventing and treating eye conditions
- 🕒 Informal care
- 🕒 The lost earnings of unemployed blind and partially sighted people, as well as the family members who care for them

It's the last of these that demands the biggest share of funds, costing something in the region of £15 million every day. There has never been a more important time to support and empower blind and partially sighted people, to encourage them on the road to independence and inclusion in society.

## Preventing sight loss in Croydon.

Croydon's population is increasing with over **51%** of people of BAME descent. Specific ethnic communities are at greater risk from some of the leading causes of sight loss, including glaucoma and diabetes, yet many people are unaware of this and the basic steps they can take towards good eye health.

More than a million people live with avoidable sight loss, so it's vital that we're active in our community, encouraging people to get their sight tested. Improving access to sight tests including adapted tests and community-based testing is an important part of what we do.

# The Local Context

The London Borough of Croydon currently has a population of **386,000 (2016 ONS)**, which is the second largest population of the **32** London Boroughs.

**9,420**

In Croydon there are 9,420 people living with some degree of sight loss.

The total number of people living with mild sight loss is 6,100.

**6,100**

**2,110**

The number of people living with moderate sight loss is 2,110.

People living with severe sight loss totals 1,210.

And increasing...

**1,210**



I found myself isolated as a new Croydon resident - it was hard not being around my friends. Then I joined Croydon Vision, their support is exceptionally useful and continues to have a positive impact on my life. The team are helpful, patient and I have great admiration for everyone.

**I am now building upon new friendships...**

**Patricia**

# Croydon Vision is planning for the future

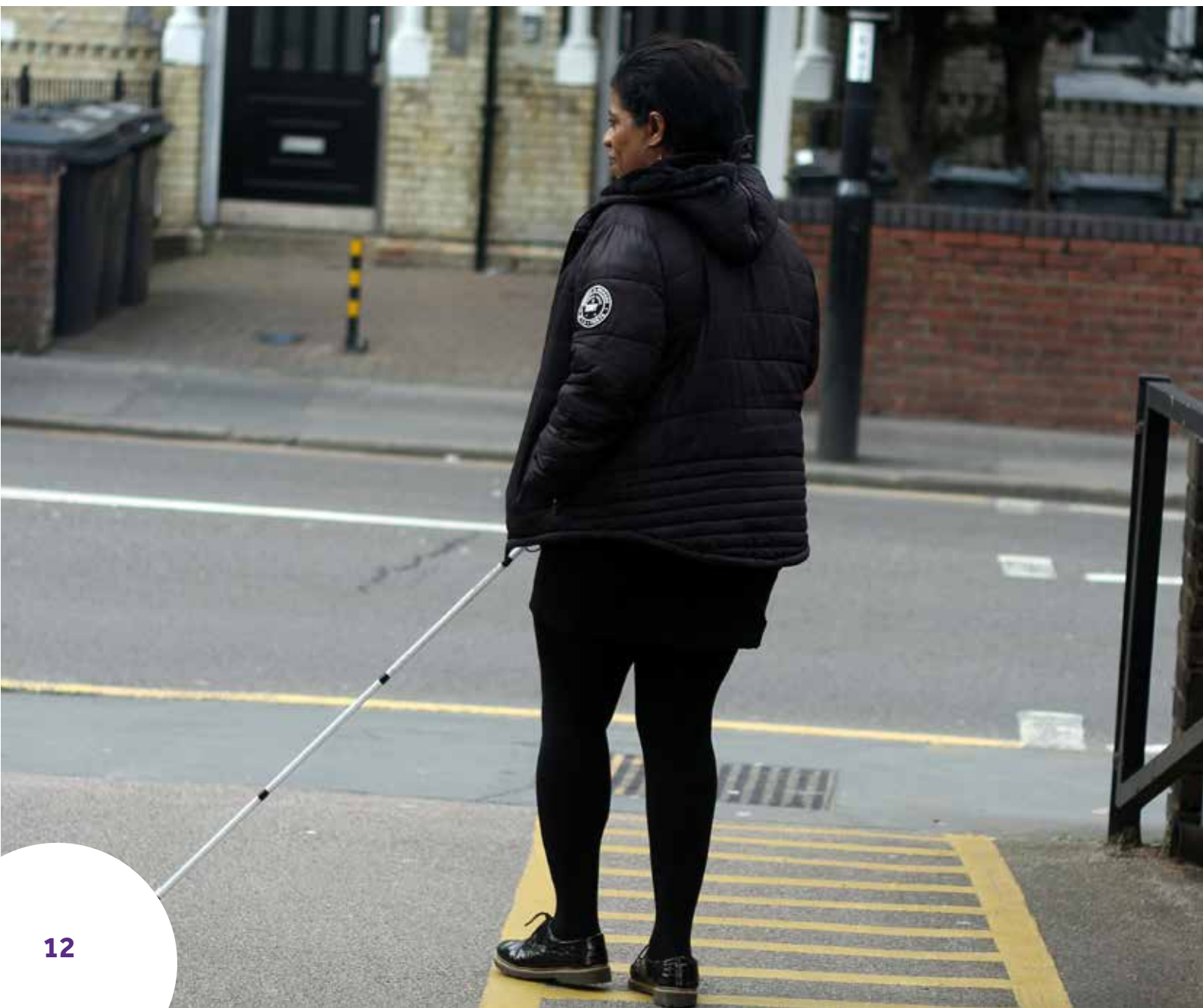




# Our strategic priorities.

Looking ahead there are five key areas where we want to improve our offering for our members and the community at large:

- ❶ **Coproduction** – members to drive the development of products and services.
- ❷ **Community** – improving our reach and engagement
- ❸ **Accessibility** – transforming our premises and improving technology usage
- ❹ **Holistic Health** – putting our members at the centre of their care pathways
- ❺ **Sustainable Reach** – improving our brand, communications and income stream



## 1 Coproduction – to drive service development.

We want our members to actively shape our development. As such we're looking to develop our participatory framework in a bid to meet the needs and aspirations of our members more accurately. We want to harness our members' everyday observations, opinions and experiences, to help us anticipate opportunities for improvement. In November 2018 a stakeholder engagement event was held, which proved to be extremely successful in identifying weaknesses and opportunities for the charity. One area we're now looking to improve as a result of that feedback, is providing support and opportunities for working-age members getting back to work, without the added constraints of delayed software and support.

We will improve how we record and collect data by accessing Croydon's wide variety of open data and analytics. We'll compare relevant information such as location, ethnicity, age and gender to pinpoint specific areas that require service development or resource reallocation. Accessing such data will also enable Croydon Vision to anticipate new funding opportunities and collaboration potential, for example, with transport networks and key services.

We've identified three key changes we can make to ensure our offering appeals to members of all ages: **offering alternative times of sessions, close collaboration with other charities & businesses, better promotion of our services via appropriate social channels.**

### **Our members to actively shape service development:**

- 🕒 Continuity of a vibrant, engaging service enablers group (All Ages)
- 📱 Social media engagement; reaching more people and improve awareness
- 👥 Continue to invest in team development (Volunteers, Trustees & Staff)





## 2 Community – improving our reach and engagement.

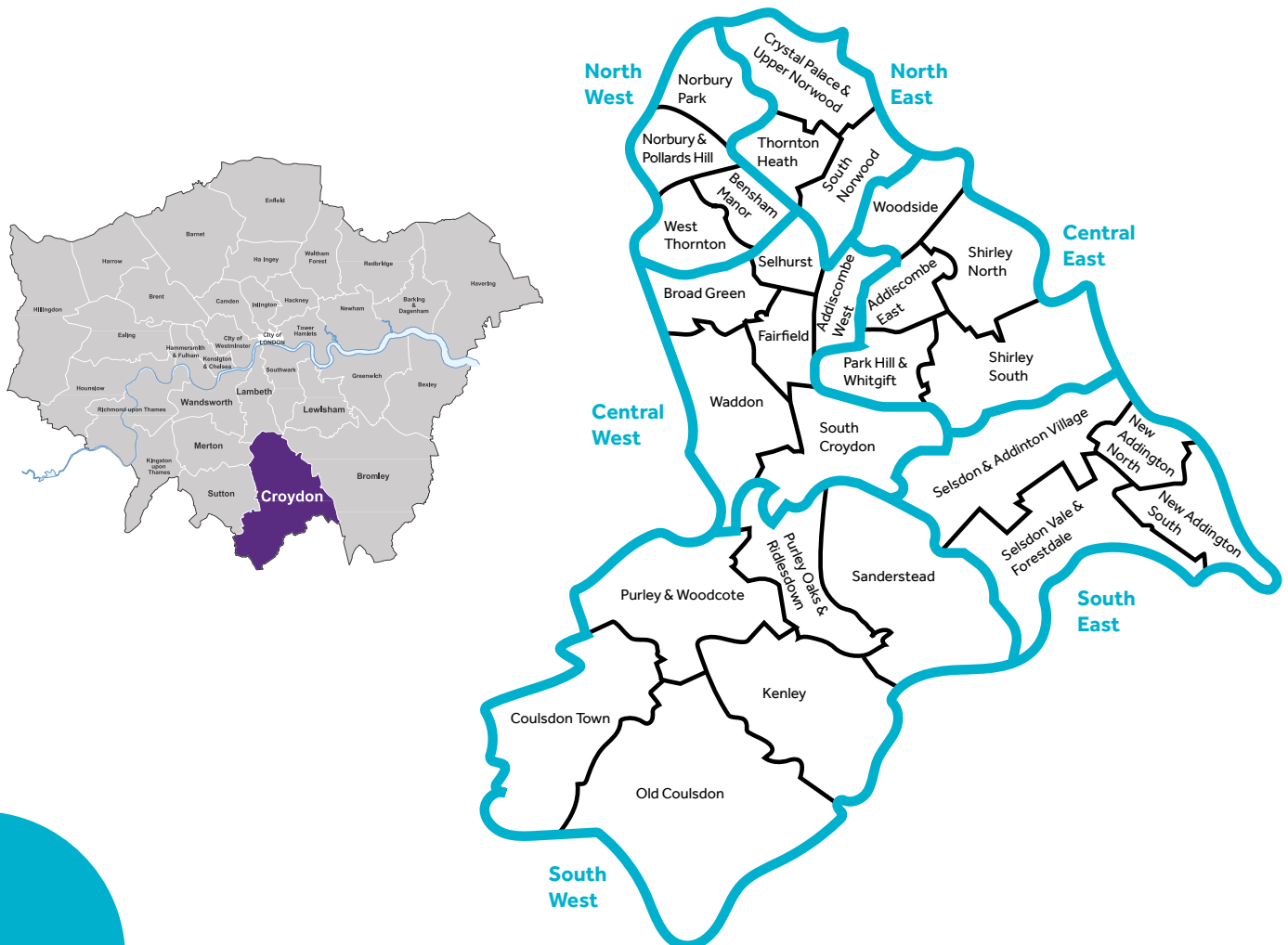
We're now aiming to expand our outreach service for sight loss residents. As the number of people living with sight loss is set to increase in our area, Croydon Vision will need to maintain organisational growth to be able to support the community from both a prevention and an intervention perspective.

With that in mind we have recently launched a limited community outreach program for current housebound members. We acknowledge that the availability of the fleet does not allow full coverage for geographic reach and frequency of service, to ensure that members can attend activities. So our goal is for assistive equipment and technology to be transported to the community for members, who may not be able to access Bedford Hall due to ill-health or travel limitations.

Given this, a key priority in 2020 and beyond is to continue our income generation efforts so that we can invest in Outreach Officers, our vehicle fleet and additional drivers in order to grow the Croydon Vision member base and improve geographic reach - locality networks.

### Improving our reach & engagement in Croydon:

- Greater inclusion in social and community life for people with sight loss
- Replacement of fleet and increase resource (Drivers); to reach many more people
- Expansion of Outreach Officers from 2 to 4; **greater coverage of the borough:**



### 3 Accessibility – transforming our premises & improving technology usage.

A key priority for Croydon Vision is to make improvements to our buildings. The installation of a lift will dramatically improve accessibility. General accessibility improvements around the building will also enable us to use more of the space, as well as potential revenue stream (allowing Croydon Vision to hire out the space to other community organisations/start-ups).

We're also committed to investing in tech training. The resource centre provides the opportunity to support members through existing accessible technologies and identify new and emerging innovations. The priority is to identify specific funders and collaborative partners to support this further.

Croydon Vision wishes to establish an accessible technology steering group and forum, incorporating members as well as similar charities within the catchment area. This will allow us to conduct small pilot studies on the efficacy and cost-benefit analysis of new technology before investing in costly equipment that could be defunct within a short period.

#### Transforming our premises & improving technology usage:

- Ⓒ Improved building accessibility – lift
- Ⓒ Creation of a mobile technology hub; to reach the community and awareness
- Ⓒ Develop an active tech committee; building mentor/mentee opportunities





## 4 Holistic Health – putting members at the centre of their care pathways.

Croydon Vision will seek to improve its partnership working within the NHS England Integrated Care Plan. This NHS scheme has been piloted in Croydon and the South East of England and seeks to absorb various care pathways in order to provide patients with choice, autonomy and a holistic care experience. One of the primary outcomes of this plan is preventative care, which should result in cost savings and enhanced wellbeing through consolidation of services within the borough. We will also ensure that social integration and rehabilitation is a focus – mapping the sight loss pathway for those who do not have any additional health issues.

We will continue to work with members and care professionals, making sure that patient and carer engagement is a key focus. Enabling members to self-care - **“no decision about me without me”**.

Croydon Vision will participate in promoting integration from bottom up, support in evaluation and build in quality improvements that are measurable.

### Putting our members at the centre of their care pathways:

- 🕒 Together we can create more awareness and reduce avoidable sight loss
- 🕒 Supporting people with sight loss from despair to independent living
- 🕒 Improve inclusion and empowerment, building confidence to self-advocate



## 5 Sustainable Reach - improving our brand, communications & income stream.

As a significant proportion of Croydon Vision members engage online, it is a key priority that we create a communication strategy with targeted website and social media content. A dedicated member of staff will be required to support these activities, as well as increase membership and fundraising. Croydon Vision will align its Marketing and Social Media action plan with these activities (with key objectives such as increased online reach and effective conversion). Adapting the newsletter for tracking data metrics, to assist in improving overall communication and engagement with our members.

Croydon Vision will commit to continually updating our website to meet website content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) and also by exploring the use of audio and options for additional languages), this is vital due to the diversity in Croydon.

### Improving our brand, communications & Income stream:

- 🕒 Creation of a working communication strategy including a lead staff
- 🕒 Increased networking event to engage with businesses, schools, health professionals, family, friends of Croydon Vision
- 🕒 Increase community knowledge on sight loss software's/accessibility





We have one simple mission; to give our members the tools and support to living independent lives.

There's a movement of positive change, there's excitement at Croydon Vision – be a part of this journey with us:

# Act now & be a part of this exciting future...



Volunteer or Staff role – join us; we believe in growing together; impacting lives



Calling on businesses to empower people, building futures, changing perceptions



Fund us to continually build brighter tomorrows for people living with sight loss



Local authority, voluntary sector, NHS – let's improve lives for sight loss residents



Fundraise for us today because together we can create sustainability

We are here...



Changing how we **SEE**

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