DeafblindUK

Impact report 2025–26

When support changes what is possible

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01 When support changes what is possible



Every day, people living with deafblindness face challenges that most of us will never have to think about.

Finding information. Communicating with other people. Getting to work. Accessing healthcare. Staying connected to family and friends. Feeling confident outside the home. Making choices about the life they want to lead.

Deafblindness can mean constantly adapting to a world that is not always designed with you in mind.

But it does not have to mean giving up the things that matter.

At Deafblind UK, we believe people living with deafblindness should be able to thrive in today's world not simply survive.

In 2025–26, that is what we did.

And behind every number is a person.

Our Impact at a Glance

These numbers tell a story of reach. But they do not tell the whole story. The real measure of our impact is what happens because Deafblind UK is there.

For many people, the hardest part of living with deafblindness is not simply the loss of sight and hearing. It is what can come with it.

Isolation. Uncertainty. Frustration. The exhaustion of having to explain your needs again and again. The feeling that systems are not designed for you or are able to support you.

That is why our support is more than providing information. It is about creating connection, confidence and choice.

In 2025–26, our Charitable Services team delivered more than 38,700 direct support interventions across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

That support included wellbeing, communicator guiding, befriending, technology, housing, information and support for carers and professionals.

We also launched the National Usher Syndrome Helpline with Deafblind Scotland, creating a single specialist point of access for people with Usher syndrome, their families, carers and professionals.

Sometimes, impact is simply knowing that someone understands.

4,346 people supported with dual sensory loss

38,700+ direct support interventions delivered

9,620 befriending calls made to combat isolation

8,864 wellbeing calls made to check in with our community

374 volunteers gave their time and expertise

£263,682+ value of volunteer time

229 carers supported

1,671 schools reached with deafblind awareness resources

303 accessible social opportunities listed on our webmap

450,000+ people in the UK affected by deafblindness

03 Victoria's story

Victoria spent two years trying to secure a deafblind assessment and have her travel funding restored. There were setbacks. There were moments when she felt like giving up. But we were there throughout.

That is impact. Not just a transaction, not just a statistic, but someone knowing they do not have to face the next challenge alone.



“Finally, it felt like there was someone who understood, someone who was in my corner.

— Victoria

04 Turning isolation into connection

Loneliness can be profound when communication and access to the world around you are already difficult.

Our befriending services exist because sometimes the most important thing we can give someone is connection.

During 2025–26, we made 9,620 befriending calls, providing regular human contact to people experiencing isolation and loneliness. Nearly 200 people accessed our befriending services.

And the difference can be found in the small moments. A conversation. A laugh. Someone who listens. Someone who does not need you to explain everything.

Our accessible social webmap grew from 135 opportunities to 303 – a 124% increase. Every organisation listed has completed our Deafblind Friendly Assessment and been offered awareness upskilling.

We are not simply helping people connect. We are helping create more places where connection is possible.

“Sophie is so easy to talk to and so understanding. Her approach when chatting is quite informal, which is lovely. And to have had a laugh together was so good.”

— Person supported by Deafblind UK

05 When wellbeing begins to change

At Deafblind UK we know that good support starts with listening.

Our wellbeing calls are one way we make sure people are not left to struggle alone.

This year we made 8,864 wellbeing calls, checking how people were, offering support and signposting them to services that could help.

People using our support reported an average wellbeing score of 2.4 out of 5 at the beginning of support. By the end, this had risen to 4.6 out of 5.

That is more than a number. It represents people feeling more supported, more connected and better able to cope.

2.4/5

↑

Self reporting of wellbeing at beginning of support.

4.6/5

↑

Self reporting of wellbeing at end of support.

06 Independence means having choices

For someone living with deafblindness, independence does not necessarily mean doing everything alone. It means having the right support, tools, technology and environment to make their own choices.



Our work helps people access information, communicate, use technology, find employment and education, socialise and live as independently as they choose.

At Rainbow Court in Peterborough, we continue to provide safe and welcoming homes for people who are deafblind, including people with complex needs.

Because a home should be more than somewhere safe. It should be somewhere you can belong.

Our ambition is to go even further, expanding our independent living provision, so more people can have the opportunity to live with greater independence, security and choice.

Technology can open a door

Technology is increasingly fundamental to independence for people living with deafblindness.

It can be the difference between being able to communicate with someone you love and being cut off. Between accessing information and being excluded from it. Between doing something independently and needing someone else to do it for you.

During 2025–26, Deafblind UK worked with technology companies on accessibility across iPhone VoiceOver, smartphones, Braille displays, screen readers and app navigation.

We established a Technology Advisory Group so that people living with deafblindness could directly influence developers.



> **“I think this equipment can completely transform your life. As someone who has recently become deafblind, it gives me hope.**
>
> — Assistive Technology Showcase attendee

> **“It’s really important. There simply isn’t anywhere else where this knowledge is being packaged and presented to the people who need it most.**
>
> — Eyecare Liaison Officer

That is what technology should do. Not simply making something accessible. Make something possible. Changing lives beyond the person we support.

Our impact does not stop with the people who directly use our services. If a professional understands deafblindness, they can provide better support.

If a school understands deafblindness, a child grows up in a more inclusive environment. If a technology company understands deafblindness, thousands of future users may benefit.

08 Giving people a voice

Our impact is strongest when people living with deafblindness are not simply recipients of support, but active participants in shaping what happens next.

Our Advisory Group continues to influence the development of our services and products. Its members are helping shape areas including research and technology, ensuring that lived experience remains at the heart of our work.

This year we also launched parliamentary roundtables in the House of Commons and Northern Ireland Assembly, bringing people living with deafblindness, professionals, advocates and parliamentarians together to identify priorities for action.



09 Building the evidence for change

If we want the world to understand deafblindness differently, we need more than good intentions. We need evidence.

The Deafblind UK Centre for Education and Research at Birmingham City University is becoming an important platform for national and international collaboration.

During the year, Deafblind UK contributed to research exploring healthcare pathways, communication, the experiences of children and young people, social care, touch in deafblind practice and the experiences of people who have grown up deafblind.

This work matters because today's research can become tomorrow's better practice, better services and better outcomes.



Our impact is made possible by people

None of this happens because of Deafblind UK alone. It happens because people choose to stand alongside us.

In 2025-26, 374 volunteers gave their time, energy and expertise. Together, their contribution was valued at more than £263,682+ equivalent to staff costs.

But the value of volunteering cannot be measured in pounds alone.

That is the power of community.
People supporting people.
People finding purpose.
People making a real difference.

£263,682+

The value of our 374 volunteers' contribution in equivalent staff costs.

> **"I'm a Helpline Volunteer and also support a telephone and in-person social group. I decided to start volunteering as I had to get out of the headspace I'd found myself in, and volunteering gave me purpose and was an opportunity for me to give back. Being able to volunteer I feel has saved me. I'm in a different headspace; I've become a different person.**
>
> — Chris, volunteer













Your support changes what is possible

Every donation. Every fundraising event. Every hour volunteered. Every partnership. Every gift left in a will. Every business that chooses to support us. Every person who tells someone else about deafblindness. It all adds up.





In 2025–26, our total income increased to £3.84 million, with growth driven primarily by grant funding and charitable activity income. Income from charitable activities increased to £1.74 million.

This income enables Deafblind UK to continue delivering specialist services while investing in the capacity, people and infrastructure needed to meet growing demand.

At 31 March 2026, group reserves stood at £5.54 million, including £2.1 million designated towards the development of a new supported living provision.

Behind every pound is a possibility. A phone call answered. A person connected. A family supported. A professional educated. A piece of technology made more accessible. A barrier challenged. A life made a little easier.

£3.84m

The figure our total income increased to in 2025–26

£5.54m

The figure group reserves stood at on 31 March 2026

Our vision remains clear:

A world where people living with deafblindness thrive, empowered by knowledge, support and equity.

We are building towards that world through five connected areas of impact:

1. Supporting people to live the lives they choose.
2. Educating others so understanding replaces uncertainty.
3. Researching deafblindness so evidence drives better practice.
4. Influencing decision-makers so systems become more inclusive.
5. Harnessing technology so innovation creates opportunity rather than exclusion.

Nearly 100 years of being there

Deafblind UK was founded in 1928 by deafblind people and their carers.

For almost a century, we have evolved alongside the people we exist to support.

The need is growing. More than 450,000 people in the UK are affected by deafblindness, and that number continues to rise.

So our ambition must continue to grow too.

1928

The year Deafblind UK was founded

450,000+

The number of people in the UK are affected by deafblindness

What's next?

For almost 100 years, Deafblind UK has been here for people living with deafblindness.

We have learned what works. We have listened to the people we support. We have challenged barriers, created connection and helped people live with greater independence, confidence and choice.

But the world is changing.

And the need is growing.

More than 450,000 people in the UK are living with some degree of dual sensory loss, and that number is expected to rise. We cannot simply look back at what we have achieved. We have to think about what people living with deafblindness will need for the next 100 years.

For us that means thinking bigger.

Our ambition is to create more opportunities for people to live independently, access specialist rehabilitation, develop new skills, build confidence and connect with others who understand.

And as we approach our Centenary in 2028, we are beginning to turn that ambition into something very real.





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