# Royal London Society for Blind People and Royal Blind Society announce formal alliance

**Tuesday 4 March, 2014**

Following formal discussions The Royal London Society for Blind People (RLSB) and the Royal Blind Society (RBSoc) have agreed to form an association to better serve the needs of vision impaired children and young people and their families in England and Wales.

RLSB and RBSoc represent two dedicated, expert organisations with common values and a shared vision of how we can provide world class post diagnosis provision and development opportunities to children and young people living with sight loss.

Year on year RLSB is reaching more young people across London and the South East. Last year over 1200 participated in our services and we expect that figure to be closer to 2000 in 2014.

The Royal Blind Society supports 275 young people and families through its Children and Families Service which incorporates The Eyeless Trust, with whom they merged in early 2013. The RBSoc also owns two hotels in West Sussex and Llandudno which offer holidays to vision impaired people and their families.

Formal discussions will now focus on the details of how the charities will work together whilst retaining their separate identities for the meanwhile.

Concurrently RBSoc has decided, following long consideration, to review the provision of hotel accommodation at the Belmont Hotel in Llandudno in relation to both organisations' vision for services for blind and partially sighted children.

RBSoc recognises that the Belmont continues to be important to many vision impaired people, as well as the staff who have maintained a real passion and dedication to improving the lives of the guests.
In their talks the RBSoc and RLSB will also examine how the Bradbury Hotel in Worthing can offer services that best meet client needs in the future.

Dr. Tom Pey, RLSB Chief Executive said of the partnership discussions:

"I am incredibly proud of how far RLSB has come in the past few years. Our fantastic staff have transformed the charity into one fit to meet the needs of vision impaired young people in the 21st century. This association will mean two of the oldest sight loss charities in the country connecting as one strong innovative voice to realise our ambitions to drastically improve the life chances of the young people we serve."

Caroline Armitage, RBSoc Chief Executive Officer stated:

"The Royal Blind Society has been looking at the best way to continue serving vision impaired people into the 21st Century. The vision and values of RLSB and RBS are closely aligned and both organisations believe that we are stronger together than we are apart. I am particularly excited by the opportunity to build on the heritage of The Eyeless Trust, which merged with us in 2013, and RLSB's skills in children's provision to expand our life changing services for vision impaired children and young people across England and Wales.

"I am delighted to be continuing as Chief Executive Officer for the Royal Blind Society until Easter and will be helping to ensure the smooth transition in an advisory capacity after that time."

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