

Hong Kong Blind Union

2021-2022 Annual Report

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OUR MISSION

Hong Kong Blind Union

Blind Union was established in 1964. It is the first self-help group organised and managed by people with visual impairment. It aims at promoting the spirit of self-help and mutual-help as well as striving for equality, opportunities and independence for visually impaired persons.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT By Wong Chun-hang, Billy

It has been a year of challenge and change for us in 2021/22. Thanks to all kinds of support from our members, colleagues, volunteers and donors, we successfully navigated through the worst days of the pandemic, striving unceasingly for equality, opportunities and independence for the visually impaired.

The severe outbreak of the pandemic makes life even tougher for the visually impaired. Many members not only need to deal with the troubles of getting everyday necessities and anti-infection items, but also the hassle of going out while having to comply with all the stringent Covid-19 rules implemented. After we raised our concerns and provided suggestions in response to the anti-infection measures on many occasions over the past year, the government made corresponding arrangements to facilitate the visually impaired to adapt to the measures in place, for example the scanning of LeaveHomeSafe venue QR codes on their own. In addition, to support the visually impaired riding out the storm, Blind Union has set up a coronavirus information hotline and offered daily and pandemic necessities for free to members in need, backed by the support from various charitable funds.

Another highlight of this year is the opening of YAU CAFE, a social enterprise that offers both coffee and massage, enabling baristas and masseurs with visual impairment to draw on their talents. We hope to establish this one-of-a-kind café as a platform for the visually impaired to explore diverse career paths and for people from all walks of life to learn more about Blind Union as well as the abilities and needs of the visually impaired.

In 2021, Blind Union welcomed the new-term Executive Committee and its various committees, with plenty of new faces joining and long-standing members taking up new roles. Blind Union belongs to all of you and it is a shared goal of the Executive Committee this year to let every member play an active role in the right position. We are dedicated to offering a platform to nurture more visually impaired talent, empowering more members to give full play to their strengths in different sectors of the community.

Last but not least, I would like to thank everyone who has accompanied Blind Union every step of the way. All of our past achievements will stand us in good stead during such an unprecedented time, and none of this would have been possible without your unfailing support.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT By Ko Pik-Kei, Peggy

More than two years into the pandemic, there is no denying the way we socialise, interact and work has dramatically changed. But in many ways, it has broadened Blind Union's horizons and led us to many breakthroughs as we act in the spirit of self-help and mutual-help.

In need of stronger employment support

Improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities remains our top priority, especially amid the coronavirus pandemic. Established in mid-2021 and supported with funding from the Social Welfare Department, YAU CAFE aims to hire the visually impaired directly, to showcase their capabilities to the public and to promote social inclusiveness. As the city's first cafe that offers both coffee and massage, it is well received by the community and business corporations. YAU CAFE has gained a lot of exposure shortly after its opening as it has become the choice of event venue for many enterprises and organisations. Blind Union would like to take this opportunity to thank the public for the support and the hard work of every co-worker at the café, in particular the baristas and masseurs with visual impairment. It is only with their exceptional services that we can get this ball rolling.

Funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the one-year Hong Kong Jockey Club "Empathy, Empowerment & Employment" Project was launched in 2021/22 to provide vocational training and social enterprise placement opportunities for over 60 people with disabilities. Among them, nearly 10 participants were employed by the relevant social enterprises after the internship. It is a living example of how disabled individuals can realise their potential and get recognised in the workplace as long as they are given opportunities.

Today, people with disabilities still face harsh employment reality, however the results of the above two programmes show us that everyone can achieve success if one never ever gives up.

Making advancements through innovative services

Funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the "Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service" made some major breakthroughs last year, including the launch of on-the-spot services for local sports events and the introduction of audio-description services for sports into the public broadcasting arena. In October 2021, we began to offer audio descriptive commentary for live sporting events broadcast on RTHK TV channels. In addition, thanks to the support of Now TV, we incorporated our services into the 2021 UEFA European Championship with the provision of the live broadcast signal, enabling the visually impaired to keep abreast of this world-class football match online.

Launched by the end of 2017, Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project is another key innovative technology initiative of Blind Union. Under the project, we developed an indoor navigation mobile app the "Smart City Walk" to guide the visually impaired and other users in need to the desired destinations independently. As at early 2022, the "Smart City Walk" had already lined up with more than 150 indoor venue partners for setting up positioning and navigation systems. In January, we kick-started the integration of outdoor and indoor positioning and navigation technologies with the aim of offering a seamless indoor- outdoor navigation. Without the need of switching between different mapping platforms, it is the first mobile app that offers indoor-outdoor navigation in Hong Kong.

Appreciation for the contribution of our staff

As many other social welfare organisations, Blind Union has been wrestling with a brain drain in the past year. Despite a shortage of talent, we demonstrated a good team spirit and filled in for each other when needed to ensure that our services remain uninterrupted and with high quality. After a few years of suspension due to the social unrest and the outbreak of the pandemic, our retreat day for colleagues and committee members was back last year. This long-awaited activity offered an opportunity for the participants to learn more about each other's work and for Blind Union to recognize the efforts of its staff members. Everyone actively contributed to the discussion and made many constructive suggestions on the strategic directions for the development of Blind Union.

Here I express my heartfelt thanks again for the dedication of every colleague who at one point in time, was or is still engaging. I look forward to working alongside you all in the same determined spirit, continuing to encourage self-help and mutual-help and driving forward the development of Blind Union.

Our Team

Nearly half of the staff members of Hong Kong Blind Union are visually impaired persons. We have adopted a preferential recruitment policy for people with visual impairment, enabling them to develop to their full potential. Visually impaired candidates who meet the basic entry requirements for a post will automatically be invited to attend the selection interview/test. Candidates with visual impairment found suitable for employment will be given preference for an appointment over other applicants.

As at 31 March 2021

Total number of staff (Full time and part time): 96

Number of disabled staff (Full time and part time): 52

Remark: Number of employees in the above already include the full time and part time staff of Blind Union as well as the social enterprises under the association.

Services Units

- 1 Promoting correct concepts of visual impairment through publications, seminars, exhibition, and so on;
- 2 Participating in advisory committees of the government and other concerned organisations;
- 3 Following up on social policies, promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion;
- 4 Keeping in touch with relevant international and Mainland organisations to learn about the latest service development;
- 5 Building relationship with the public and organizing fundraising projects; and
- 6 Publishing newsletters and audio magazines to report on the lives of visually impaired persons and the work of Blind Union.

Services Centre

- 1 Organising different kinds of social and recreational activities;
- 2 Providing support services to persons with visual impairment and the newly blind as well as their families, including counselling, life adaptation training and service referrals, so as to help them overcome obstacles arising from visual impairment;
- 3 Organising activities for visually impaired elderly, and contacting them regularly by phone calls and home visits; and
- 4 Providing daily living support services, such as case referral, purchasing of aids, and helping to build district support network among our members.

Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

- 1 Striving for equal opportunities in education by advocating for proper implementation of integrated education;
- 2 Supporting visually impaired students studying in mainstream schools by providing aids and support services to them;
- 3 Organising adult education courses;
- 4 Arranging services, such as recording, text-reading, Braille transcription and tutoring for members;
- 5 Organising personal development and leadership training programmes;
- 6 Providing supported employment services for visually impaired job seekers; and
- 7 Arranging freelance jobs to provide working opportunities for those members who are unemployed

Accessible Digital Technology Centre

- 1 Conducting research and development of assistive aids suitable for visually impaired persons;
- 2 Providing visually impaired persons with technical support and training in using digital devices;
- 3 Promoting the adoption of accessible digital technology design and application; and
- 4 Providing related advisory services to individuals, schools, employers and organisations.

Accessibility services office

- 1 Implementing projects related to e-learning, sports and music development as well as providing various kinds of supportive services for people in need ;
- 2 Providing various kinds of supportive services for print disabled students so that they can make the best use of e-learning and break down barriers to learning.
- 3 Providing visually impaired persons with professional audio description for sports programmes and assisting visually impaired persons to receive professional music training to fully develop their talents.

Social enterprise

- 1 Operating on a social enterprise model to promote barrier-free community facilities, as well as creating employment opportunities for visually impaired persons;
- 2 Promoting accessible facilities in a bid to avail to the visually impaired the information and services to sighted persons;
- 3 Providing one-stop consultation and support services for all sectors in the aspects of digital technology, facilities, and products.

Service snapshots

There are six units in Blind Union to provide comprehensive services to visually impaired persons in Hong Kong. They are the Head Office, Services Centre, Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre, Accessible Digital Technology Centre, Accessible Service Office and Social Enterprise.

Head office

The work of the Head Office includes member affairs, rights advocacy, human resources, financial management, external relations and communications. Its aim is to carry out the mission of Hong Kong Blind Union and strive for the rights of visually impaired persons (VIPs).

Member affairs

Any Hong Kong resident with visual impairment is eligible to become our Full Member. Any VIP living outside Hong Kong or anyone who supports our mission can apply to be an Associate Member.

87 Full Members and 12 Associate Members joined Blind Union in 2021/22. As at 31 March 2022, we had a total of 1,744 Full Members and 368 Associate Members. The 57th Annual General Meeting was held on 29 August 2021. 155 members participated and 10 members were elected the Executive Committee Members of 2021/23.

One virtual meeting and one tea gathering between the Executive Committee and members were held in the year consulting members' views on the 2021/22 annual plan with a total of 37 participants. Four new member orientation activities were organised throughout the year and a total of 24 people participated.

Rights advocacy

Fighting for equal opportunities and basic rights of VIPs is the aim that Blind Union has been striving for years.

Rights advocacy amid the pandemic

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, Blind Union published several articles on various social media platforms reflecting the lack of awareness to take care of the needs of visually impaired people in response to the anti-infection mandates. Suggestions were made to the government for facilitating the visually impaired to adapt to the measures in place, such as the LeaveHomeSafe app, quarantine measures and compulsory testing arrangements, getting attention from the media and the community at large. Besides, we strived to have the visually impaired who took up freelance jobs to benefit from the Employment Support Scheme so that they could also get the support they need.

Striving for the provision of health care vouchers to the disabled

Blind Union advocated the implementation of the Health Care Voucher Scheme for the disabled. In 2021, we formed with many organisations for the disabled and parent groups the Alliance for Striving for the Inclusion of the Disabled under the Health Care Voucher Scheme and submitted our requests to the departments concerned.

Concern for the community support for the acquired blind persons

Blind Union released jointly with the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong the study report on community support services for the acquired blind persons in October 2021, examining the existing support services available to the visually impaired and recommending many improvements to the government including employment, medical-social collaboration and community service.

Attending external meetings

Blind Union's representatives attended regularly meetings and facilities inspections organised by Transport Department, MTR Corporation, Housing Department, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service and Network on Services for Persons with Visual Impairment, following up many facilities and services concerning the visually impaired, for example the new electronic audible traffic signals, the newly completed MTR stations and shopping malls. On top of these, we participated in consultation meetings on barrier-free facilities for different sites during the reporting period, for example the M+ museum of the West Kowloon Cultural District, Conservation Resource Centre and Kai Tak Sports Park. We also met with representatives from The Hong Kong Association of Banks, Octopus Cards Limited and Census and Statistics Department to propose our suggestions on different subjects.

Eradicating the barriers to living an inclusive life in the community

This year, we handled a total of 47 cases where members were not able to live inclusively in their communities. These included 17 cases of inadequate barrier-free facilities in the community, eight cases related to transport services, 11 cases on public services such as medical services and housing, two cases regarding the use of accessible information technology, and nine cases concerning the service quality of private organisations, personal affairs and other matters.

Public education and communications

We believe that increasing public awareness and acceptance of VIPs is very important for our full integration into the community. Therefore, Blind Union has always endeavoured to promote public education so that the public can have a correct understanding of the life and ability of VIPs and become aware of our needs, making Hong Kong an inclusive society.

Public education seminars and activities

Composed of visually impaired members of Blind Union, the Public Education Subcommittee delivered 47 public education seminars in the year. Participating organisations and individuals included kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, universities, elderly people and volunteers with a total of about 1,500 participants. We also collaborated with the Labour and Welfare Bureau to provide training on public education to various government departments.

The Public Education Academy

With the funding support from the Labour and Welfare Bureau this year, the Public Education Academy was launched, where an array of public education events ranging from different types of seminars on public education, experiential activities to braille promotional roving vehicles were held. Available on Blind Union's website, five animated films featuring our mascots Mr White Cane, Miss White Cane and Braille Soldiers were produced to share about the daily life of the visually impaired.

Communication work

Blind Union communicates with the public through various channels on topics relating to the visually impaired and promotes their self-help and mutual-help spirit to fulfil its mission.

To provide our members and the public with the latest updates of Blind Union, we upload relevant information and news regularly to our official Facebook page and Instagram account. We have also shared more videos via our YouTube channel and even tried our hand at live streaming amid the pandemic for more interaction with our members and the public.

On top of online platforms, Blind Union also makes use of periodical publications to share updates. Two issues of newsletter "Better Tomorrow for All" were published and 63 episodes of "The Voice" were produced.

Fundraising Activities

About 50% of the funding for our service development comes from public donations each year. The remaining less than 50% is from the government's annual recurrent grant. The donations received are mainly used to support VIPs in education, employment, welfare, social participation and accessible information technology services and to encourage their full integration into society.

Flag Day 2021

The Flag Day of Hong Kong Blind Union was held on 29 May 2021 on the Hong Kong Island and also online, along with the launch of the Gold Flag to boost awareness. Flag Day 2021 raised about HK\$660,000 in total with more than 1,000 volunteers joining, among which some 100 were our visually impaired members.

International White Cane Day 2021

In celebration of the International White Cane Day, we promoted the message to the public that the visually impaired can integrate into society, participate equally in all aspects of life and live independently. A fundraising campaign for the Blind Union through crowdfunding were also launched in the year with our members driving the initiatives, including a night hike and a musical. A total of HK\$340,000 was raised and approximately 100 members participated. The musical was broadcast live on Facebook with about 1,200 views.

Pop idols' fans-initiated philanthropic work

Not only showing support for their idols, fans also spread positive vibes and direct their love to various social welfare organisations and Blind Union is one of the beneficiaries. The official fan club of Jer Lau from boy band Mirror collaborated with YAU CAFE to organise a charity gift set sale in November 2021, successfully raising HK\$30,000. In addition, fans of Keung To from Mirror also organized braille card-themed and fandom activities at YAU CAFE, with HK\$40,000 raised to support the employment and education services for the visually impaired.

Corporate fundraising initiatives

We partnered with a number of enterprises to host fundraising activities during the year. Backed by Cartier (Hong Kong) with a sponsorship of HK\$200,000 over 1,000 Cartier gift packs, including braille cards made by the visually impaired and coffee drip bags from social enterprise YAU CAFE, were sent to medical staff of Kwong Wah Hospital as a token of appreciation in December 2021. We also collaborated with Johnson & Johnson (Hong Kong) to launch a series of corporate social responsibility activities, sponsoring members to participate in health talks and get health check-ups and eye examination and arranging the company's volunteers and members from the Blind Union to participate in handicraft workshops held in YAU CAFE.

Proceeds from these campaigns after deduction of cost was about HK\$50,000

Exchanges in mainland China and overseas

Attending conferences and exchanges overseas

The General Assembly and Asia Pacific Assembly of the World Blind Union, originally scheduled to be held in May 2020 in Madrid, Spain, was postponed to June 2021 and conducted online due to the pandemic. Representatives from the Blind Union participated in the assemblies and Mr Jason Ho, the then Vice President of Blind Union, was elected as the General Secretary of the Asia Pacific region of the World Blind Union.

Services Centre

The scope of work of the Services Centre (the Centre) is closely related to the life of visually impaired persons (VIPs), including recreational, sports and cultural activities, life adaptation and services for the newly blind. The objectives are to help them live independently and enable them to integrate into the community.

Social and recreational activities and continuing learning courses

Some of the activities of the Centre had to go virtual instead of in-person due to the repeated Covid-19 outbreaks. During the year, 93 face-to-face social and recreational activities were held, mainly between September and December when the pandemic eased. Activities included movie/drama viewing, hiking, visits and DIY musical instrument workshops, with 1,396 members, 66 associate members and 530 volunteers participating. Other than group activities, the Centre switched some of the festive celebrations, large-scale activities and health talks of the Department of Health to online mode, attracting members who seldomly joined before with a more diversified range of activities in new formats. During the year, the Centre held a total of 59 virtual social and recreational activities, which were well received with 2,328 members, 172 associate members and 32 volunteers joining.

Group activities and volunteer training

Regular interest groups include Chinese music, Karaoke, card game and a pop band called The Jumpers. The groups had a total of 90 gatherings throughout the year with a VIP attendance of 677. No community services or performances were organised due to the pandemic. On training for volunteers, the Centre conducted five training sessions with 45 participants, including university students, primary students and members of the public.

Services for the elderly

The Centre used multiple ways to connect with the visually impaired elderly, in particular the members who seldomly went out to join our activities, with the aim of finding out their living conditions and support network and introducing relevant organisations or other community resources for them to acquire the necessary support. Besides, we also offered more care services to our visually impaired elderly members through telecare and home visits to provide them with anti-infection items.

This year, we focused our elderly services on telecare calls, home visits and case follow-ups. Our care group made a total of 685 calls and 122 visits to show our support, with the elderly and chronically ill members as our target service group to keep abreast of their latest conditions. Due to the prevailing pandemic, the care group and volunteers of the Red Cross paid fewer regular home visits to the visually impaired elderly, and just met them at the door briefly during the times when the pandemic worsened. Home visits to our senior members were mainly replaced with telecare calls for some months. During the year, we served 20 elderly households with 77 home visits and 165 telecare calls.

Support service for carers

With the new additional funding from the Social Welfare Department, we started to provide carer support services in November 2020. Stepping into the second year of operation in 2021/2022, we offered comprehensive support services to the visually impaired and their carers for them to build a more harmonious relationship among family members. Stress of caregiving could be relieved through counselling and small group or social recreational activities. Throughout the year, 28 cases were opened for the visually impaired or carers. There were 66 home visits, plus 40 social recreational activities with 334 and 83 visually impaired and sighted persons participating respectively. Besides, six therapeutic groups and four visually impaired and carer mutual-help groups were formed.

Individual funding programmes

Community Support Service for VIPs and their Families

The programme received funding from the Social Welfare Department again for three years starting from 1 January 2021. Apart from counselling services for the newly blind and their carers, tailored life skills training for the newly blind individuals and district support for the visually impaired, the programme also included Living Environment Adaptation Services. Adopting various intervention strategies, such as counselling, personal or small group training, escort services for medical appointments and personal matters as well as community education, the programme enabled the newly blind to integrate into the community and to live with dignity.

The programme followed up 30 newly blind and carer cases between January and December 2021 assisting them to cope with difficulties in life, along with two support and mutual help groups for them and their family members to establish a peer support network. During the same period, there were 351 applications for our escort services, aiding a total of 79 visually impaired individuals during the pandemic. Services included 306 times for escort service for medical appointments (87%), 32 times for household cleaning service (9%) and 13 times for shopping service (4%).

The Living Environment Adaptation Programme mainly assists VIPs who face challenges due to neighbourhood redevelopment, relocation and changes in job, family or vision to adapt to new travelling routes or get to know other people with visual impairment in the community. The Centre handled 24 cases in the year, providing 211 times of support service including the provision of basic mobile phone or computer skills courses, white cane training and orientation and mobility training to support the various needs of VIPs for everyday life.

Counselling and support services

With the support from The Community Chest of Hong Kong, a total of 51 cases were handled during the year. Workers catered to the needs of individual members by means of emotional support and resource referrals.

Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

The scope of work of the Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre (VERC) includes advocating equal opportunities in education and employment for VIPs, helping them cope with problems in study and work, and enhancing their personal growth and development.

Supportive Services for Visually Impaired Students

With funding from The Community Chest of Hong Kong, we continued to run the Supportive Services for Visually Impaired Students. A total of 479 sessions of services were provided, with more than 2,052 participants. The services provided are as follows:

Counselling and support services

This year, VERC handled over 29 counselling and support cases. With the use of casework approach, our staff had an in-depth understanding of the needs of individual visually impaired students and provided services for them, including support for their learning, emotional support and resource referrals.

One-on-one district-based homework tutoring support services

A total of three phases of district-based homework tutoring services for visually impaired students were launched in the year. We arranged volunteer tutors to provide one-on-one homework tutoring for visually impaired students based on their area of residence and learning needs. There were setbacks due to the pandemic, with some tutoring sessions temporarily suspended and some switched to video or voice call mode. A total of 13 tutors served 14 visually impaired students in the year, recording a total attendance of 164 and 210 hours of services.

Personal growth experiential activities

A total of 55 personal growth experiential activities were held this year. 652 VIPs and sighted persons participated in the 111 sessions of these activities and among them, 327 were visually impaired students and their parents. Activities ranged from music, sports, arts, culture, craftsmanship, community services and so on. Through these activities, we hoped to facilitate visually impaired students' personal growth. Due to the pandemic, some activities were changed to online activities.

Talks on "Inclusive Campus" / online radio programme "Integrators' Zone"

The VERC regularly imparts the message of equality and inclusion in schools. During the year, we visited 30 secondary schools, held 67 talks on "Inclusive Campus" for 2,646 teachers, students and staffs.

In addition, we produced 12 episodes of the online radio programme "Integrators' Zone" for the year, which enabled the public to know more about the situation of inclusive education for students with visual impairment. Close to 3,151 people listened to the programmes online from April 2021 to March 2022 while about 4,798 people accessed the programmes through the hotline system. The programme allows the public to understand the inclusive education of visually impaired students.

Support for parents

This year, we continued to promote parents and parent-child work with the support of The Community Chest of Hong Kong. A total of 26 visually impaired student and parent lessons/groups, workshops and a series of summer programmes were organised. In addition, we stayed in touch with more than 50 families with visually impaired children through messaging apps releasing regularly useful information, and showed our care and concern for the needs of the parents and their visually impaired children through face-to-face and group discussions. Before and after our meetings with the Education Bureau and representatives of Ebenezer School during the year, we arranged preparatory and review meetings with the parents to enhance their knowledge on the education policy, ways to advocate and presentation skills. The parents considered such meetings an effective platform to communicate with the school and the Education Bureau.

Other education-related activities

Group work

The VERC formed seven groups in the year providing 30 sessions of activities, including reading club, VIPs civil society concern group, education policy concern group, voice coaching, family and life planning group to public education ambassador training group. The total number of group members was 78 and the total attendance of the sessions was 193, with an average turn-up rate of 82%.

Continuing education

Five education programmes for adults were successfully held between September 2020 and August 2021, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities programme, the Use of Smartphone and Mobile Apps programme, the Basic Application of Computer for the Visually Impaired programme, Communication at Work and Job Interview Skills for the Visually Impaired programme and the General and Business English Tailored for the Visually Impaired programme. The programme for The Application of Smartphone for Work and Assistive Tools for Study was cancelled because of the pandemic.

Wing Chun classes were organised as usual to encourage the diversified development of our members.

Scholarships

Six visually impaired young people were awarded the Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund and five with the Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund, being granted a total of HK\$100,000 from the two funds for the year. As in-person and virtual ceremonies could not be arranged due to the pandemic, the results were announced via Blind Union's website on 25 April 2022 with the list of awardees published.

Career development Services

Supported Employment Services

The VERC continued to offer Supported Employment Services funded by the Social Welfare Department, serving over 40 users a month and a total of 64 service users throughout the year. Among them, 13 service users secured employment (i.e. being employed continuously for six months with a monthly salary of more than HK\$1,500). Nine members participated in job attachment programmes and one earned a job trial opportunity. Other than the above, we helped three members submit application for the Support the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities run by the Social Welfare Department and the Central Fund for Personal Computers for procuring assistive tools and computers.

Employment related programmes and activities

Webinar : Building a disability-inclusive workplace The Centre and World Blind Union co-organised a webinar on 16 April 2021 under the theme “Building a Disability -inclusive Workplace” with 163 participants attending. Guest speakers, including representatives from Vision 27 Australia, Microsoft (Hong Kong), Be My Eyes and our former president Chong Chan-yau, discussed the importance of creating a disability-inclusive workplace, the challenges and solutions in employment and life for the visually impaired and the employment trend of the disabled in the future, while promoting a disability-inclusive workplace culture amongst relevant stakeholders from around the world, such as NGOs, employers, the visually impaired, scholars and specialists. Videos showing the employment situation of the visually impaired and interviews of a visually impaired baristas and their managers were shared during the webinar to encourage more employers to provide equal opportunities to the visually impaired.

"Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme"

The Better Tomorrow For All Voucher Scheme was rolled out in April 2020, in which the income from prepaid vouchers supported the visually impaired masseurs in the form of an advance of salary for meeting immediate financial needs amid the pandemic. The scheme was concluded on 31 July 2021 with success. More than 1,800 vouchers were sold with an income of more than HK\$370,000, benefiting more than 20 visually impaired masseurs.

In keeping with the spirit of this scheme, we assisted in applying for the “Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprises” project under the Social Welfare Department and opened the first social enterprise in Hong Kong playing the crossover of massage and café, YAU CAFE, in September 2021. Apart from facilitating the employment of masseurs with visual impairment and training the visually impaired baristas, the Centre has also continue to checks in with new hires to see how things are going

Visually impaired barista training courses

To explore more career options for the visually impaired, the Centre ran two barista training courses between June and July 2021 to equip the visually impaired with employable skills for them to stand out and take up open employment in a competitive job market. Nearly 70 people applied for the training courses, with 10 members being enrolled and completed the whole course and a three-month internship. After the internship, seven members were employed by YAU CAFE as baristas and some were hired by other coffee shops which were interested in hiring visually impaired baristas after reading media reports.

Prepaid salary scheme for YAU CAFE masseurs

With the tightened social distancing measures from January 2022 in view of the pandemic situation, massage parlours had to be closed until February stretching over the Lunar New Year and hence Blind Union launched a two-instalment prepaid salary scheme for YAU CAFE’s masseurs in January and February respectively. The scheme adopted a prepaid wage model for offering immediate financial assistance to masseurs who had worked in YAU CAFE. 10 masseurs applied for the scheme, which each received a salary advance of HK\$3,000 in each instalment to help ease the heavy economic burden amid the pandemic.

Blind Union Care Ambassadors

We rolled out the Blind Union Care Ambassador programme with funding from the Shih Wing Ching Foundation, supporting members who suffered income loss during the pandemic. The programme employed four members as Blind Union Care Ambassadors for three months from March to June 2022. They were responsible for making calls to members to conduct employment surveys and to learn about their employment situation and needs. They also made telecare calls to members aged above 60 to find out their needs amid Covid-19.

Promote an inclusive workplace culture

The Centre was invited by various organisations and companies to conduct sharing sessions or workshops on the employment of the visually impaired, including raising awareness among employers and their staff on the visually impaired and discussing the difficulties the visually impaired face at work, with the aim of facilitating them to work with visually impaired colleagues. Events included:

- Partnered with other organisations to conduct workshops about placement follow-up and counselling skills for placement officers of the Selective Placement Division, discussing the needs of people with different types of disabilities, communication skills, placement follow-up tactics, counselling skills and case studies;
- Hosted a sharing session for the staff of Home Market about working inclusively with the visually impaired, talking about the needs of the visually impaired to perform their day-to-day work tasks; and
- Provided training sessions to the staff of Beyond Vision Projects who were responsible for the Beyond Nature Project, sharing information on orientation, mobility and route planning of the visually impaired and points to note. They could then tailor the content of the training courses for the visually impaired guides.

Temporary Unemployment Relief Scheme

Many people were left jobless or underemployed during the fifth wave of Covid-19 infections and applications for the government's Temporary Unemployment Relief Scheme were open in March 2022. The Centre received calls from 53 members registering and requesting our assistance in their applications, with 36 members submitting their applications with the help of our colleagues.

Advocacy on education policies

Support for DSE students

Between June and July 2021, the Centre collected and compiled the views of students who sat the DSE examination in the previous year. On 29 July 2021, we met with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority to follow up suggestions and ideas proposed this year including the application of assistive equipment, examination papers and answer sheets, the safety of the examination venues and issues raised from homonyms. The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority accepted the Centre's suggestions in general and would strengthen its communication with the examination venues and examinees to ensure the examinees know their rights and the arrangements for the examinations.

Follow-up on education policies

After collecting the suggestions of parents on education policies, we followed up on 5 November 2021 in a meeting with representatives of both of the Education Bureau and Ebenezer School to reflect the learning challenges and conditions of the visually impaired students, exchanging ideas and serving as a communication channel among the parents, students, Ebenezer School and the Education Bureau. In the meeting, we discussed the arrangements for online teaching amid the pandemic, transition plans for Ebenezer School, arrangements for students with learning differences and classroom efficiency, and also reviewed issues evolved around the Individualised Education Plan (IEP) and the Ebenezer Resource Support Programme (RSP) among others. The Bureau responded to the Centre's suggestions positively with some being considered and accepted. The parents found the meeting an effective channel to communicate with the Education Bureau. After the meeting, the Centre continued to follow up on the implementation of the new measures and assist to refer the visually impaired students in need to Ebenezer School.

Advocacy on employment policies

Concerns on the arrangements of the redevelopment of Factory for the Blind, founded by The Hong Kong Society for the Blind

The transition arrangements for the relocation of The Hong Kong Society for the Blind's Factory for the Blind and the retirement age for the workers remained our key concerns. The factory updated the workers and trainees about the transitional arrangements for the relocation, which the alteration works for the Ping Shek temporary factory site was due for completion in May 2022 and the relocation to this temporary factory site to be carried out in June. After gauging views of the factory workers earlier on by the factory, the retirement age was extended to 60 and the factory began to sign up new contracts with workers who wished to extend their retirement age in December 2021. The Centre would continue to follow up with workers and trainees on their needs and difficulties over the relocation and the new contracts and to offer necessary assistance to them.

Research on the current employment situation

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong has rolled out a research with Blind Union on the employment of the visually impaired in Hong Kong. The objective of the research focuses on the impact of meaningful work on the mental health of the visually impaired, the impact of self-labelling on meaningful work and mental health of the visually impaired and the creation of a meaningful work environment that can reduce the possibility of self-labelling of the visually impaired. After following up with the University of Hong Kong on the design of the questionnaire and its content, the Centre will assist in the promotion and recruitment of members to participate in the research. The first phase of the survey was kick-started in May 2022.

Other employment related initiatives

The Centre continued to send its representatives to participate in the work of the "Alliance of Quota System for Disabled Persons" to follow up on issues regarding the employment of the disabled, writing proposals regularly, participating in consultation meetings and conducting employment surveys and more. The Alliance brought in more organisations which expressed concern over employment of the disabled to discuss about the advocacy of their common goals and to leverage their collective influence.

VIPs Civil Society Concern Group and its work with community organisations The VIPs Civil Society Concern Group continued to build connections with different community groups and organisations. Last year, the group collaborated with various organisations after the Roundtable Community meetings to organise many community forums, promoting exchange and fostering interaction among organisations and members. Besides, the group also co-hosted with other associations a range of community exchange forums for students, youths, the homeless and wheelchair users among others. The forums provided opportunities for members and the community to learn about the daily life of each other, the impact of the pandemic and social issues for educating members on their rights and encouraging community participation.

Education of VIPs in China

Support for visually impaired students in China Financial assistance under the Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China was provided in the form of grants to support visually impaired students in Meizhou Special Education School, Zhenjiang Special Education School and Shandong Binzhou Medical School. As at 31 March 2022, 50 students benefited from the grants, amounting to RMB134,240.

Accessible Digital Technology Centre

The Accessible Digital Technology Centre aims at improving daily lives of visually impaired persons (VIPs) with the use of technology. Our work scope includes the development of assistive aids, technical support and training, promotion of accessible technology design and application, and provision of support and consultancy services to organisations and needy individuals.

Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project

Under the Jockey Club Smart City Walk project funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, we developed an indoor positioning and navigation mobile app, Smart City Walk, with the integration of different navigation technologies. The app uses audio and text outputs to guide the visually impaired and other people in need, such as the elderly, to go out independently and reach their destinations easily. Other than indoor positioning and navigation, this project acquired in early 2022 from the Lands Department outdoor map data so that users may receive the indoor and outdoor map data synchronically.

The Smart City Walk app is now available on iOS and Android. Up to March 2022, there were 8,000 downloads and 150 indoor venue partners supporting the Smart City Walk mobile app, mainly including venues under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, shopping malls, tertiary institutions and transport facilities.

To gain the support of more venues, Blind Union continued to meet with the management teams of different venues and government departments, introducing to them the details of the project and inviting them to join as venue partners, including West Kowloon Cultural District, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Lands Department, MTR Corporation, tertiary institutions and developers of other shopping malls.

Blind Union also introduced to the public the Smart City Walk mobile app through setting up promotional booths in different venues, launching campaigns on social media platforms and participating in the “Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit 2021”. In July 2021, we also held a press briefing at Yue Man Square announcing it as the 100th venue partner. On public education, we organised many online sharing sessions with target audiences from the Institute of Shopping Centre Management, City University of Hong Kong and Baptist University, sharing with them mainly on the updates of the use of smartphones by the visually impaired, the basic concepts of barrier-free information and the application of the Smart City Walk mobile app.

Under the programme, Blind Union organised 21 sessions of training on the use of the Smart City Walk mobile app for people with visual impairment and the elderly with a total attendance of 178.

Promoting accessible information technology

Blind Union is committed to promoting and supporting the design and application of accessible information technology. We shared with the banking staff of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation on the importance of accessibility, diversity and inclusion during their participation in the Global Accessibility Awareness Day 2021.

Meanwhile, we promoted to different stakeholders the importance of accessibility design and carried out tests on many mobile apps and websites to check on the accessibility levels, including LeaveHomeSafe, registration platform of Consumption Voucher Scheme, Declaration System for Individuals Tested Positive for COVID-19 Using Rapid Antigen Test, electronic payment systems, Electronic Health Record Sharing System and KMB. We reflected to the government and departments concerned the barrier-free design issues. Part of the test results were announced on our social media platform attracting media coverage.

Organising IT interest groups

IT interest groups of various themes, such as the iOS Smartphone Group, organised regular online meetings and activities to strengthen the bond among members and foster mutual aid. Throughout the year, 11 meetings were held with an attendance of 146. Ten IT skills and knowledge enhancement exchange meetings were held in the year with a total of 103 attendees.

IT training and support

The Centre provided members with Helpdesk service for handling enquiries on computer software and hardware and assistive tools, receiving 1,953 phone-in enquiries and 204 face-to-face enquiries over the year. We archived more than 12 information technology related audio files and uploaded to Blind Union's website for members to access information easily for using different types of software and applications. Members may go to our website and listen to the related content anytime.

Furthermore, Blind Union published more than 11 issues of the Accessible Digital Technology Newsletter, including six issues of E-Learning for All Newsletter, with a total of 450 subscribers.

Development of internal IT management system

Backed by the Social Development Fund of the Social Welfare Department, Blind Union continued the development of the new hotline system this year. On completion of this system, the visually impaired may listen to information about activities of the Centre through the web version and the new hotline system. The internal human resources management system was launched in December 2021. To enhance the security and stability of our service, Blind Union also migrated some of the systems to the Cloud, including the Office 365 email migration and the deployment of Microsoft SharePoint and OneDrive Business to manage documents, while providing IT support to staff members.

Accessibility Services Office

The scope of work of the Accessibility Services Office includes implementing social enterprise and projects related to e-learning, sports and music development; improving community accessibilities as well as providing various kinds of supportive services for people in need.

Jockey Club E-Learning for All Project (ELFA)

Funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the project continued to provide supportive service to students with print disabilities from primary to tertiary level. The service coverage has been extended to non-students since 2019. As at March 2022, a total of 388 students and 144 schools (5,099 students with print disabilities) as well as 208 adults enrolled as service users. This year, 450 sets of electronic training materials, text books and examination papers (68,400 pages) were transcribed and 79 sets of tactile materials were produced for students in need. The training workshops had an attendance of 110 and 993 complimentary copies of software and mobile apps developed by Blind Union were distributed. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, most of the above training workshops were held online, increasing services to remote schools with fewer participants.

As part of the project, an online platform was set up to provide a variety of services such as free online optical character recognition (OCR) service, accessible e-book library, tactile material library and regular bi-monthly e-learning newsletter among others. To promote e-learning and reading, a batch of books were collected and converted into electronic version for users to borrow, in addition to conversion of text to braille of books for personal use. Reading machines were also introduced alongside training for those who were not familiar with the use of smartphones to learn reading e-books. This year, we released the guidelines for the use of Traditional Chinese e-bookstores for user's reference.

Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service

Funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for three years since 2020, we offered audio-description service for sports events in Hong Kong. The main service is to arrange audio descriptions for sports events in Hong Kong to facilitate the visually impaired to enjoy live sports events with audio and tactile assistive tools.

Activities in both physical and online formats

We provided audio-description service to 23 sports events, with the participation of 174 people with visual impairment and a total attendance of 400 including volunteers and sighted persons. Other than sports events, experiential activities were also organised for the visually impaired to learn about different sports. 7 experiential activities were held in the year with a total of 81 visually impaired participating, covering a wide range of sports from football, basketball, track bike, physical fitness training to lawn bowling.

During the time when the pandemic was severe, Blind Union launched many virtual activities to spark the interest of the visually impaired in sports, including 6 online sports programmes attracting 660 participants. Through an online channel for the visually impaired, 53 live or relay sports programmes and 33 sports related programmes were broadcast. In the year, a click-through rate of 13,728 and 547 subscribers were recorded for our online platform and YouTube channels.

Collaboration with other organisations

Thanks to the support of the media and the sports community, the programme collaborated with related stakeholders to provide audio-descriptive service in various ways, including the audio-descriptive commentary of the UEFA Euro 2020. NowTV shared with us the television signal of the game and audio descriptors from the programme were arranged to narrate the visual action, which was publicly broadcasted through an internet radio channel and Facebook, achieving a total of 43,667 click-through rate. In October 2021, Radio Television Hong Kong acquired the right to broadcast live the 2021-2022 Hong Kong Premier Youth League and programme highlights and invited members of the Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service to provide audio-descriptive commentary for its second audio channel in the live broadcast. This was the first live sporting events and highlights broadcasted on television with audio-description commentary in Hong Kong.

Promoting audio descriptions

The first training course for audio describers was conducted in the year, providing over 40 hours of training for equipping 20 qualified audio describers under the Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service. To raise the awareness of the public about audio-description service, we co-organised in early December 2021 with The Hong Kong Society for the Blind and the Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong an audio-description week, introducing the application of audio-description service in three areas including movies, arts and sports and exploring the future development of the service in Hong Kong.

Seeing Joy in Music - The one-stop support service for music development for the visually impaired. With the funding of the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities under the Social Welfare Department, Blind Union launched the Seeing Joy in Music Learning programme starting in 2021 for three years. The programme is to assist 12 visually impaired people to receive professional training in music, mainly for supporting them to learn vocal music, piano and music theory.

Music training The first training course was held between July and December 2021 providing one-on-one lessons. Each student was matched with one professional vocal or piano teacher and received a total of 10.5 hours of private training. The training also came with group sessions with different themes revolving around stage performances, including six sessions of masterclass for vocal music, five sessions of masterclass for piano, four classes of pronunciation of foreign languages and five classes of performance posture. The original plan was to hold the first community music concert in the hall of Christian Family Service Centre on 13 February 2022 on completion of the first training course but was deferred to the coming year because of the pandemic.

Braille music scores promotion and production

The programme for the year assisted 6 members and one school to transcribe 33 pieces of music to braille scores. Musical instruments included piano, vocal music and violin, encompassing examination pieces of the Royal Academy of Music and teaching materials of university programmes. In May 2021, Blind Union recruited volunteers via its Facebook page to form a volunteer team for braille music score production, which was very well received. 6 volunteer training sessions were held between June and August, with 41 members of the public attending. Upon completion of the training, a total of 25 volunteers passed the examination and became volunteers of the production team, assisting in inputting the music scores into computer and proofreading work.

Hong Kong Jockey Club “Empathy, Empowerment & Employment” Project Blind Union launched the Hong Kong Jockey Club “Empathy, Empowerment & Employment” project in April 2021 for one year with funding granted by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, operating in two phases. A total of 77 trainees participated, including those with visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical disabilities and SEN (special education needs). The project provided 10 sessions of pre-employment training, with a total of 67 trainees completing the course. Three-month on-the-job training with a total of 286 working hours was also arranged with different social enterprises. On-the-job training was arranged for 50 trainees and over half of them had already achieved more than 200 working hours with allowance provided.

A total of 18 social enterprises participated and provided more than 35 vacancies for employing trainees of the project in each phase. The project was extended to 31 July 2022 due to the pandemic.

Social Enterprise Services

Operating on a social enterprise model, Blind Union strives to promote barrier-free community facilities, acquire suitable daily necessities, as well as create employment opportunities for visually impaired persons. Our social enterprise business responds to the HKSAR Government's target of promoting barrier-free facilities and services, playing a leading role in building an inclusive society.

Brand building for the business

To promote our one-stop barrier-free professional consultancy services, the brand-new GATE website was launched in May 2021 for different sectors including government departments, tertiary institutions, non-profit making organisations and construction companies among others to learn about our professional brands. With the launch of this website, Blind Union received more enquiries about its social enterprise services.

Web Accessibility For All (WAFA)

The Web Accessibility for All programme strives to create a barrier-free digital world and to offer website and mobile app testing professional services, actively promoting the usage of barrier-free technologies while providing job opportunities for the visually impaired. With the rising awareness of public and private organisations on barrier-free designs, the relevant department employed more people with different levels of visual impairment, creating more job opportunities for the visually impaired while enhancing its testing services.

Production of tactile maps and consultancy for audio systems

In response to the government's policy of promoting accessibility, Blind Union continued to provide consultation services relating to tactile map and audio system production, the production and sales of tactile signage and more. To cater for the different requirements of barrier-free products, we provided braille transcription and related consultation services with reference to the standard set in the Building Department's "Design Manual: Barrier-free Access 2008" and also the ideas shared by our staff and members with different levels of visual impairment.

In addition, we conducted inspections at designated places to check on the facilities according to the requests of the respective venues and clients, and gave feedback and suggestions to the departments concerned.

YAU CAFE

The establishment of YAU CAFE was inspired by the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme" launched in April 2020, which financially supported the visually impaired masseurs through the sale of prepaid massage vouchers. To march forward with the self-reliance spirit, Blind Union successfully applied for funding from the "Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise" project of the Social Welfare Department in March 2021 to open the city's first cafe offering both coffee and massage therapy. Officially opened in September in the same year, YAU CAFE is dedicated to championing disability inclusion and to showcase the talents of the visually impaired, while creating employment opportunities for them.

EasyBuy

Blind Union will continue to source a wider range of affordable lifestyle products for its members to choose from and to sell basic necessities and also reading machines and anti-epidemic products such as face masks and rapid antigen test kits in the form group buying. The service was met with great enthusiasm from members.

Braille / text transcription services

Our social enterprise provides the service of adding names, phone numbers and other information in braille on ordinary name cards. Our services also include converting printed materials, Braille and audio files (such as interview recordings) into text or braille format. Target customers include government departments, private companies, social welfare agencies and tertiary institutions. Our business not only provides job opportunities for visually impaired people but also makes information accessible among the visually impaired, the public and related organisations.

Providing job opportunities for the visually impaired

To push forward the employment of the visually impaired, the social enterprises under Blind Union assume the responsibilities of both the employment of the visually impaired for them to unleash their strengths and to gain diversified work experience while offering professional services. Before the opening of YAU CAFE, Blind Union enrolled 10 visually impaired people out of 70 applicants for a barista training programme of 10 classes, with seven of them being employed as part-time baristas. In addition, 20 visually impaired masseurs were employed and paid on an hourly basis, providing head, shoulder and neck massage to customers of YAU CAFE and on-site outreach massage services.

This year, GATE employed 35 social enterprise assistants, of which 29 were people with visual impairment and 6 with other disabilities. Their job responsibilities included offering barrier-free facility site visits and consultancy service as well as braille transcription among others.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND SERVICE USERS

Full members (1744 members)

Gender

Male 51.6%

Female 48.40%

Age

17years old or below 2.13%

18-59 years old 45.80%

60 years old or above 52.07%

Associate members (368 members)

Gender

Male 39.82%

Female 60.18%

Age

17years old or below 0.30%

18-59 years old 42.18%

60 years old or above 57.52%

Cases

Rights advocacy 47 cases

Counselling cases funded by Community Chest of Hong Kong 80 cases

Carers support service 28 families

Newly blind cases 30 cases

Life environment adaptation 24 cases

Group for parents of VI students-50 families

NUMBER OF PROJECT SERVICE USERS

Jockey Club E-Learning For All Project (ELFA)

Profile of services users

388 students, 144 schools (5,099 print disabled students) and 208 adult users.

Type of disability and number of student

Visually impaired 89

Physical challenged 22

Dyslexia 214

Multiple disabilities 63

Total 388

Adult user and number of user

Visually impaired 206

Dyslexia 2

(Type of school or institution) and number.

Primary school 27

Secondary school 73

Primary school and Secondary school 3

Tertiary institute 23

Special school 10

NGO 8

Total 144

JOCKEY CLUB SPORTS PROGRAMMES WITH AUDIO-DESCRIPTION SERVICE

Number of participants

Audio describer training 20

Subscribers of project online platform & YouTube channels 547

SEEING JOY IN MUSIC

Number of participants

VIPs receiving professional training in music 12 (8vocal and 4 piano)

Volunteers assisting in braille music scores production 25

JOCKEY CLUB “EMPATHY, EMPOWERMENT & EMPLOYMENT” PROJECT

Number of participants

Completed 10 sessions vocational training 67

On-the-job training at social enterprises 50

PROVIDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR VIPs

Profile of supported employment services users (total number of services users:64)

Gender and number of people

Male 34

Female 30

Education level and number of people

Primary 1

Secondary 31

Tertiary or above 32

Age and number of people

15-35 years old 31

36-50 years old 20

50 years old or above 13

Number of VIPs employed by the social enterprises under Blind Union

Number of people

GATE part time SE Assistants 29

VI shop assistant 1

YAU CAFE VI baristas (1 full time, 6 part time)

YAU CAFE freelance VI masseurs 20

Employment related supportive services during pandemic
Blind Union Care Ambassador (short-termed employment programme)
Number of people: 4

Prepaid salary scheme for YAU CAFE masseurs
Number of people: 10

Assisting in Temporary Unemployment Relief Scheme application
Number of people: 36

ORGANISATION CHART

AGM/EGM

Executive committee

Executive Director

Sub committees under Executive committee:

Personnel Committee

Finance and Fundraising Strategy Committee

SC Consultative Committee

VERC Consultative Committee

Employment Committee

Information Technology Advisory Committee

Equal Opportunities in Social Participation Committee

Communication Committee

Social Enterprise Development Steering Committee

Music Service Advisory Committee

Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project Advisory Committee

Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service Advisory Committee

Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China Committee

Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund & Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund Committee

Staff structure:

Executive Director and service units

Head Office

Services Centre

Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

Accessible Digital Technology Centre

Accessibility Services Office

Social Enterprise

LIST OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

An Executive Committee releasing the spirit of self-help and in dependence

Being a self-help group organised and managed by visually impaired people, we select our Executive Committee Members every two years at the Annual General Meeting through a democratic election. Our Executive Committee Members supervise, manage and promote the development of Blind Union. All Executive Committee members must be our full members, i.e. visually impaired persons. The list of the Executive Committee Members for the current year is as below:

2021-2023

Executive Committee Member

President Mr Chong Chan-yau (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Wong Chun-hang, Billy (since 29 August 2021)

Vice – President

Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex (since 29 August 2021)

Financial Secretary

Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick (since 29 August 2021)

General Secretary

Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (since 29 August 2021)

Committee Members

Mr Yuen Kin-ming

Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Lau Chung-wai (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (until 29 August 2021)

Mr Wong Sung-keung, Leo (until 20 December 2021)

Mr Chong Chan-yau (since 29 August 2021)

Ms Tang Yuen-mei, May (since 29 August 2021)

Mr Tse Yun-hang (since 29 August 2021)

Mr Yim Chun-on (since 29 August 2021)

Mr Fan Chun-hung, Carter (since 20 December 2021)

LIST OF SUB-COMMITTEE

As at 31 march 2022

Personnel Committee

Mr Wong Chun-hang, Billy (Chairperson)

Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex

Mr Chong Chan-yau

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Financial and Fund Raising Strategy Committee

Mr Ho Yui-chi Merrick (Chairperson)

Mr Wong Chun-hang Billy

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Ms Choi Tsui-ping Bessie (Senior Accounting Officer)

Services Centre Consultative Committee

Mr Yuen Kin-ming (Chairperson)

Ms Tang Yuen-mei, May (Vice Chairperson)

Mr Cheung Fat-yeung

Ms Fung Po-wah

Mr Leung Sau-hing Peter

Ms Lui Yeuk-ping

Ms Chan On-na, Onna (Centre Manager)

Jockey Club Vocational & Educational Resources Centre Consultative Committee

Mr Tse Yun-hang (Chairperson)

Mr Yim Chun-on (Vice Chairperson)

Ms Choi Lok-sze

Mr Chung Chi-ming

Mr Ho Ho-yuen

Mr Kong Chi-kwan Ken

Mr Lam Wing-fai

Ms Lui Yeuk-ping

Ms Kwong Man-yi Mandy (Centre Supervisor)

Information Technology Advisory Committee

Mr Fan Chun-hung, Carter (Chairperson)

Mr Lau Chung-wai (Vice Chairperson)

Mr Chong Chan-yau

Mr Kong Chi-kwan Ken

Mr Wong Sung-keung Leo

Mr Yuen Kin-ming

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Mr Wong Sze-fung Terry [General Manager (Social Enterprise)]

Equal Opportunities in Social Participation Committee

Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex (Chairperson)

Mr Sze Yan-kit (Vice Chairperson)

Mr Chung Chi-ming

Mr Ho Yui-chi Merrick

Mr Lau Man-fai Michael

Mr Tam Sai-kit Perry

Mr Wong Chun-hang Billy

Ms Wong Tsz-yan

Mr Yam Pok-fai

Mr Yim Chun-on

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Mr Li Wai-kuen Jonas (Project Officer)

Communication Committee

Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (Chairperson)

Ms Leung Wai-chi, Maggie (Vice Chairperson)

Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex

Ms Choi Lok-sze

Mr Chou Chun-cheong Daniel

Mr Ho Ho-yuen

Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick

Mr Lee Chi-wai

Mr Liu Kwai-yuen Raymond

Ms Wu Pui-sze Soso (Senior Communications Officer)

Employment Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)

Mr Tse Yun-hang

Ms Chan Yuen-mui Monica

Ms Chiu Chi-wun

Prof Wong King-shui Phyllis

Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)

Ms Kwong Man-yi Mandy (Centre Supervisor)

Social Enterprise Development Steering Committee

Mr Wong Chun-hang, Billy (Chairperson)

Mr Chan Chi-kong Alex

Mr Chow Kin-chun Kevin

Mr Ho Yui-chi Merrick

Mr Leung Tsau-tin Fred

Mr Ling Ho-wan Howard

Ms Wong Ming-wai Jennifer

Mr Yim Chun-on

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Ms Cheuk Ming-wai Adelaide (Senior Project Officer)

Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project Advisory Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)

Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin

Mr Fong Po-kiu Francis

Mr Charles Mok

Mr Fred Sheu

Mr Wong Sung-keung, Leo

Dr Alice Yuk

Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)

Mr Wong Sze-fung Terry [General Manager (Social Enterprise)]

Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service Advisory Committee

Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (Chairperson)
Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex
Mr Chow Kin-chun Kevin
Mr Lau Chung-wai
Mr Li Tak-nang
Dr Louie Hung-tak Lobo
Mr Keyman Ma
Mr Yim Chun-on
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Music Service Consultative Committee

Ms Tang Yun-mei (Chairperson)
Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex
Mr Leung Tsau-tin Fred
Mr Ho Ka-leung Jason
Mr Ho Yui-chi Merrick
Mr Lee Hin
Ms Lun Mei-ling
Ms Li Sze-lai
Ms Shek Kin-chong Jess
Mr Stanley Wong, Mr
Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China Committee

Mr Tse Yun-hang (Chairperson)
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Ms Ho Man-wai Amy
Mr Zhu Min, Julian
Ms Ko Pik-kei Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Li Chu Shuk-Kwan Education Fund & Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund Committee

Mr Tse Yun-hang (Chairperson)
Mr Ronald Cheung
Ms Joanna Leung
Ms Li Sze-lai
Mr Yim Chun-on
Mr Eric Yip
Dr Alice Yuk
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

HONG KONG BLIND UNION STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (ALL AMOUNTS IN HONG KONG DOLLARS)

INCOME	2022	2021
Donation and fund raising income	2,251,985.38	1,851,398.57
Project income	1,985,501.28	2,193,462.57
Program income	6,393,401.34	2,684,470.70
Flag day income	657,549.40	370,192.86
Social Welfare Department subvention	6,474,440.00	5,740,951.00
Social Welfare Department grant for cafe shop project	2,190,616.00	-
Social Welfare Development Fund grant	41,160.00	14,170.00
Block Grant from Lotteries Fund	98,000.00	78,000.00
Labour and Welfare Bureau subvention	53,564.88	37,752.35
Community Chest Allocations	625,100.00	687,610.00
Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust grant	11,386,873.39	9,502,230.50
Other income	439,672.75	228,136.22
	32,597,864.42	23,388,374.77

LESS: EXPENDITURE	2022	2021
Personal emoluments	769,509.72	981,755.74
Programme and project expenses	27,404,850.59	19,192,930.90
Flag day expenses	55,701.39	36,493.52
Administrative expenses	607,771.04	413,856.78
Rent and rates	365,808.00	360,208.00
Audit fee	18,000.00	15,000.00
Utilities	196,295.78	108,868.54
Depreciation	4,782.00	4,980.00
	29,422,718.52	21,114,093.48

	2022	2021
Income minus Expenditure	3,175,145.90	2,274,281.29
Net transfer to Project funds not yet utilized/	(39,462.56)	(126,260.94)
Surplus for the year before appropriations	3,135,683.34	2,148,020.35

APPROPRIATIONS	2022	2021
Transfer to Labour and Welfare Bureau Surplus Account	(3,150.85)	(31,852.35)
Transfer from Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund	25,433.30	24,597.30
Transfer from Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund	68,954.80	113,386.30
Transfer to Social Welfare Subvention Surpluses Account	(9,512.00)	(11,112.00)
Transfer from/(to) Lump Sum Grant Reserve/	159,483.14	(692,439.72)
Transfer to Provident Fund Reserve	(74,810.16)	(52,307.11)
Transfer from/(to) Block Grant Reserve	2,106.00	(6,275.00)
Transfer to Social Welfare Department Community-based Support Projects for Persons with Disabilities and their Families Grant	(111,345.64)	-
Transfer (to)/from Social Welfare Development Fund	(17,051.20)	88,115.15
Transfer to Social Enterprise Development Fund	(808,316.92)	(243,374.00)
	(768,209.53)	(811,261.43)

	2022	2021
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	2,367,473.81	1,336,758.92

HONG KONG BLIND UNION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2022
(ALL AMOUNTS IN HONG KONG DOLLARS)

ASSETS	2022	2021
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	15,067.00	16,249.00
Investment in securities/	614,500.12	363,745.39
Subtotal	629,567.12	379,994.39
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks	28,978.88	14,148.52
Accounts receivable	5,017,315.53	3,472,762.18
Deposits and prepayments	505,309.59	564,065.87
Fixed deposits	10,803,493.06	11,874,201.52
Cash and bank balances	3,808,637.84	1,672,651.79
	20,163,734.90	17,597,829.88

LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES	2022	2021
Accounts payable and accrued charges	903,938.23	368,015.58
Project funds not yet utilized	1,033,440.16	993,977.60
Deposits received and receipts in advance	/2,047,930.29	2,587,930.08
	3,985,308.68	3,949,923.26

	2022	2021
NET CURRENT ASSETS	16,178,426.22	13,647,906.62
NET ASSETS	16,807,993.34	14,027,901.01

RESERVES AND FUND BALANCES	2022	2021
General Fund	6,619,716.15	4,252,242.34
Other Funds and Reserves		
Development Fund	5,663,868.75	5,713,268.75
Sister Moira Education Fund	147,833.62	150,911.39
Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China	415,796.44	389,641.90
Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund	189,273.81	344,707.11
Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund	132,877.52	31,832.32
Labour and Welfare Bureau Surplus Account	35,003.20	31,852.35
Social Welfare Subvention Surpluses Account	69,762.00	122,362.00
*Lump Sum Grant Reserve	1,028,387.93	1,556,525.17
**Provident Fund Reserve	626,990.81	540,703.65
Block Grant Reserve	4,660.43	6,766.43
Social Welfare Department Community-based Support Projects for Persons with Disabilities and their Families Grant	111,345.64	-
Social Welfare Development Fund	189,125.01	172,052.49
Social Enterprise Development Fund	1,523,352.03	715,035.11
One-off Subsidy for Organising Social Activities for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities	50,000.00	-
	16,807,993.34	14,027,901.01

*lump sum grant reserve will be used for improving our service and organize social and recreational activities.

**provident fund reserve will be used for improving staff benefits relating to MPF.

The above accounts are not specified financial statements in relation to the company. The specified financial statements for the financial year with which those accounts purport to deal will be delivered to the Companies Registrar after the Annual General Meeting. An auditor's report has been prepared on the specified financial statements for the financial year. The auditor's report i) was neither qualified nor modified; ii) did not refer to any matter to which the auditor drew attention by way of emphasis without qualifying the report; iii) did not contain a statement under section 406(2) or 407(2) or (3).

EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

EXPENSES

Programme and project expenses 93.1%

Personal emoluments 2.6%

Administrative expenses 2.1%

Rent and rates 1.2%

Utilities 0.7%

Flag day expenses 0.2%

Audit fee 0.1%

=100.0%

SOURCE OF INCOME

INCOME

Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust grant 35.8%

Social Welfare Department subvention 20.7%

Programme income 17.6%

Donation and fund raising income 6.9%

Social Welfare Department grant for cafe shop project 6.9%

Project income 6.2%

Community Chest Allocations 2.0%

Flag day income 2.0%

Other income 1.4%

Block Grant from Lotteries Fund 0.3%

Labour and Welfare Bureau subvention 0.2%

=100.0%

Acknowledgements

Government Departments & Statutory Bodies

Companies Registry, Education Bureau, Equal Opportunities Commission, Home Affairs Department
Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Hong Kong Productivity Council, Immigration Department, Labour and Welfare Bureau, Lands Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Office of Government Chief Information Officer, Radio Television Hong Kong, Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department, Social Welfare Department

Funds

Chen Yang Foo Oi Foundation Limited, PL Choy Wing Sum Charitable Foundation Limited, The Community Chest of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, Shih Wing Ching Foundation, Zonta Club of Hong Kong East Charitable Trust

Schools

Department of Sport, Physical Education and Health, Hong Kong Baptist University, Ebenezer School & Home for the Visually Impaired

Non-profit Organisations

Agape Methodist Church, Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong, Association for Geoconservation Hong Kong, Association of Hong Kong Nursing Staff, Be My Eyes, Beyond Vision Projects, Centre for Access to Football in Europe, Centre For Community Cultural Development, Christian Family Service Centre “Jockey Club Golden Age Journey Project-Hong Kong Auxiliary Professional Scheme”, HKJC Junior Sports Reporters Programme, Hong Kong Football Association, Hong Kong Guide Dogs Association, Hong Kong Red Cross Act of Care Project, Hong Kong Seeing Eye Dog Services, Hong Kong Sports Association for the Physical Disabled, Hong Kong Young Women’s Christian Association - Jockey Club Sham Shui Po Integrated Social Service Centre, Hong Kong Youth & Tertiary Students Association, iBakery, Jockey Club Youth Football Development Programme, Joyful Miniature Association, New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, No Limits

Non-profit Organisations

StoryBox, The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong Youth ImpACT Award, The Cycling Association of Hong Kong, China Limited, Vision Australia

Volunteer Groups

Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department Volunteer Team

Corporates

Baillie Gifford Asia (Hong Kong) Limited, BC Rangers, Bless Club (HK) Limited, BLUENOCC, Book Punch, Breakthrough Limited, Centre for Access to Football in Europe, Christine M. Koo & Ip, Solicitors & Notaries, Coin Dragon Limited, Commercial Radio Productions Limited, Cosmos Books Limited, Eastern Long Lion Basketball Team, Hong Kong University Press, Intralinks Inc., Johnson and Johnson (Hong Kong) Limited, JoyLove Integrated Medical Centre, King Wah Company Limited, Kitchee Sports Club, Lee Man Football Club, Logos Ministries Limited, Lonely Paisley, Manchester United Football Club, Man Tat Wigs Manufacturing Limited, Microsoft Hong Kong Limited, Mirror Jer Fanclub, MTR Corporation Limited, New World Development Company Limited, Now TV, Optimas Capital Limited, Oxford University Press (China) Limited, Pak Fah Yeow Investment (HK) Company Limited, Pearson Education Asia Limited, Prosimex Company Limited, Relax Zone, Richemont Asia Pacific limited, Sky Educational Press (HK) Limited, Starbucks Coffee Asia Pacific Limited, Supreme Management Service Limited, The Coffee Pro Limited, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, The HongKong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, The Green Pagoda Press Limited, The Merton, The Wellness Hub, The Visionary Customer Service Centre, Typesetter Publishing, Watami (China) Company Limited, Whitepaper Publishing, Your Choice

Individuals

Anson Lee, Dr Pierre Chan, Chan Hiu Ming, Chan Ming-shan, Chan Tak-sin, Chan Ting-bong, Chan Wai-yue, Chan Wing-ming, Chau King-hua Bernard, Cheng Kai-ming, Cheng Siu-kwan, Cheng Shuk-ming, Ronald Cheung, Cheung Chi-ho Eric, Chow Chor-yuen Morris, Chow Kam-ling, Cheung Ka-wai, Christopher Chan, Andy Cole, Chung Ming-tat, Zint Erna, Francis Fong, Fu Kwok-keung Edwin, Stephen Griffin, Ip Tai-ho, Becky, Ken Jonk, Kwok Shek-san, Lai Man-lung, Lau Shun-man, Law Man-ting Albert, Law Siu-kuen, Lee Chan-hung, Lee Chang-chi, Lee Kin-wo, Rev Lee King-hung, Lee Shun-

cheung, Lee Yeung Yat-fan, Leung Chi-bon, Leung Kin-wah, Leung Kwok-chor David, Leung Lai-ping, Leung Yuk-ying, Li Chi-fong, Li Si-lai, Li Tak-nang, Li Tze-wei, Li Wong On-ni Annie, Lim Gee-chung Godfrey, Lok Chi-yeung, Lok Wai-ming, Michelle Loo, Dr Lobo Louie, Luk Siu-ming, Keyman Ma, Mak Kam-chan, Winnie Mak, Jonathan Man Ng Pui-fong Iris, Wilhelmina Ngai, So Siu-long, Fred Sheu, Suen Chun-long, Tam Yue-man, Tang Yu-ching Calvin, Tin Kwong-ping, Tse Pui-lan Bonnie, Tse Tak-him, Tsoi Wai-kin, Wong Kam-ling Anna, Wong Lok-quan, Wong Man-kit, Wong Suk-ki, Stanley W. H. Wong, Yeung Wai-fong, Edcon Gabriel Yau, Yick Yiu-ho, Yip Siao-bing Teresa, Yip Siu-fong, Yip Tsang Siu-suet, Yip Wai-chi, Yip Yin, Yip Yuk-kam, Yip Yuk-ping Elsie, Yiu Ka-wah, Yuen Wai-key, Dr Alice Yuk, BBS, JP, Yung Siu-shan, 甘珮瑤, 石常宇, 余溢明, 林楚欣, 林灝榮, 胡佩瑤, 區嘉寶, 張茗棋, 陳玉華, 陳桂蓮, 陳啟漢, 陳華燕, 陳寶琪, 彭晴, 曾漢仲, 劉文輝, 劉劍玲, 談鳳霞, 蕭梁雪華, 譚溥源

All volunteers

[Donation form]

Hong Kong blind union

Contact us

Enquiry & donation 2339 0666

24 hour hotline 3464 5000

Website www.hkbu.org.hk

Email info@hkby.org.hk

Facebook @HongkongBlindUnion

Youtube HongKongBlindUnion

Head office

Unit 13 – 20, G/F, Tsui Ying House, Tsui Ping Estate, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong
2339 0666 2338 7850 info@hkbu.org.hk

Services Centre

Unit 621 – 624, Kar Man House, Oi Man Estate, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel 2760 0100 fax 2762 1635 email sc@hkbu.org.hk

Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

Unit 13 – 20, G/F, Tsui Ying House, Tsui Ping Estate, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel 2337 2736 fax 2338 7850 email verc@hkbu.org.hk

Accessible Digital Technology Centre

Unit 13 – 20, G/F, Tsui Ying House, Tsui Ping Estate, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel 2709 5559 fax 2338 7850 email adtc@hkbu.org.hk

Accessibility Services Office

Room 1202, 12/F, Houtex Industrial Bldg, 16 Hung To Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel 3996 0760 fax 3996 0759 email aso@hkbu.org.hk

Social Enterprises

GATE

Room 1202, 12/F, Houtex Industrial Bldg, 16 Hung To Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel 3996 0760 fax 3996 0759 email gate@hkbu.org.hk

<https://gate.hkbu.org.hk>

YAU CAFE

Shop 1, G/F, Artisan House, 1 Sai Yuen Lane, Sai Ying Pun

Tel 3611 9693 email info@yaucafe.com

<http://www.yaucafe.com/>