Report of the Council for the year ended 31 December 1996

The members of the Council of the Association have pleasure in submitting their Report and the audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 1996. These have been prepared to comply with the requirements of the new statement of recommended practice (The Charities SORP).

Objects and Activities

The primary object of the Association is the breeding and training of guide dogs for blind people and the training of blind people in the safe use of such dogs. At the end of 1996 there were 4,446 guide dog owners working in the United Kingdom (4,317 in 1995). All training, feeding and reasonable veterinary care of guide dogs is provided to the users effectively free of charge. In carrying out this work the Association also receives invaluable assistance from some 1,061 puppywalkers and 282 brood stock holders.

The Association's secondary object is the provision of additional services and facilities for the relief of blind persons. These fall under the following main headings:

- 1. Rehabilitation (orientation and mobility and daily living skills) services for Guide Dog Owners, former Guide Dog Owners and potential and prospective Guide Dog Owners; also for other visually impaired people under contract to external agencies via its subsidiary company GDBA Community Care Services Ltd.
- Leisure services in the form of holiday activities and hotels in South Devon and in
 the Lake District, the latter having opened in the Summer of 1996. Operation of
 the hotels was transferred to the Association from its subsidiary company on
 1 January 1996.
- Grant funding for a range of ophthalmic and technological research and development projects.
- 4. Collaborative funding, principally with local voluntary organisations, for projects to improve services and facilities for visually impaired people. Among current projects are funding of the Joint Mobility Unit with the RNIB, an initiative to increase circulation of BT Soundings and a project to establish a new Resource Centre for Dumfries and Galloway Society for the Blind.
- Rehabilitation worker training both for the Association's own staff and for external students under contract.

The Council has decided that the aggregate cost of all these secondary activities should not exceed approximately 20% of the Association's annual direct charitable expenditure.

Organisation

The Association's services to its beneficiaries are delivered from seven Regional and eight Small Centres whose addresses are given inside the back cover of this document. Each Region is managed by a Regional Controller. There are four specialist National Directors operating from headquarters. The Association's activities are administered and co-ordinated from its headquarters which also serves as its base for Staff Training. The breeding of nearly all dogs provided by the Association is undertaken and co-ordinated by its Breeding Centre near Warwick.

The eighth small centre was opened in May 1996 on the outskirts of Sheffield. The provision of further facilities of this kind in other areas is under consideration with the aim of bringing services closer to the client.

The Association is actively supported by the unpaid volunteers within its 440 fundraising branches. These branches are accounted for within the financial statements of the Association.

During 1996 both the Director General, J.C.Oxley, and the Director of Publicity and Fundraising, N.A.Walters left the Association and Mrs A.J.Radevsky was appointed Director of Marketing. Recruitment for the new positions of Chief Executive and Finance Director is currently taking place.

An Audit Committee has been established during the year to monitor internal accounting procedures and compliance with legislation.

3. Financial Results

The Statement of Financial Activities incorporates an Income and Expenditure Account and for the year ended 31 December 1996 shows net outgoing resources of £10,537,000 (1995 £9,486,000).

The investment gains for the year amount to £10,954,000 (1995 £19,424,000) which leaves a net increase in funds for the year of £417,000 (1995 £9,938,000). The change from one year to another primarily reflects Stock Market fluctuations which are an important factor in determining the financial policy stated in this report.

4- Financial Policy

The Association has for many years pursued a deliberate policy of maintaining funds to meet its long term commitment to provide replacement guide dogs. In addition it has increasingly deemed it necessary to recognise the commitments generated by its expansion plans, central to which is the declared aim of achieving a target of 5,000 working Guide Dog Owners in Great Britain.



4. Financial Policy (continued)

A major strategic review is currently being undertaken within the Association and the decision to designate funds for specific purposes is to be deferred until the outcome of this review is known. However the following requirements for funds have been identified:

- Fixed assets representing properties and other assets held to fulfil
 the objects of the charity (£42.4m),
- 2. Guide dog replacements based upon an actuarial valuation of the cost of replacing guide dogs for current Guide Dog Owners over the next ten years (£88.8m).
- 3. Research and Collaborative Projects representing commitments already made to support projects in future years (£4.9m).
- 4. Expansion Programme based upon capital and revenue expenditure to be incurred in excess of current levels up to the year 2000. (£12.5m).

The balance of £47.5m represents the level of funds necessary to continue to pursue the Association's overall strategy, whilst operating within an environment susceptible to declines in income flows. Despite the continuation of an operating deficit, the overall level of reserves has remained at a reasonable level due largely to the positive performance of investment markets throughout the year and the prudent management of the investment portfolios.

Investment Policy

The Association's investments are managed in two separate funds by Lazard Brothers Asset Management Ltd and Mercury Asset Management Plc. Management of the funds is conducted as fully discretionary portfolios within the investment powers laid down in the Articles of Association, with the fund managers operating within specific guidelines and restrictions which are set and regularly reviewed by a Sub-Committee of the Council which meets every three months. The objective of the investment policy is to maximise total return of portfolios whilst avoiding undue risks and whilst operating within the current legislative environment. During the year both fund managers adopted a policy of conducting investment in overseas securities within their in-house unit trusts and consequently transfers of existing overseas holdings were made to these trusts.

6. Fixed Assets

The changes in Tangible Fixed Assets during the year are summarised in note β to the Financial Statements. Additions less disposals at cost amounted to £7,179,000

(1995 £4,737,000). The most significant items included in additions related to the conversion of a building to a hotel at Windermere, and the acquisition of premises at Hindhead for a new school for rehabilitation workers.

The market value of the Association's interests in land and buildings is believed to be less in aggregate than the net book value as shown in the Balance Sheet in view of the highly specialised use to which the properties are put. To take account of this, all buildings are fully depreciated over a period of 20 years.

7. Employees

The Association actively encourages a policy of staff participation at all levels in the making of decisions which affect the Association's management and future development. It also provides regular information to employees by a variety of means which include a bi-monthly staff newspaper. An elected staff representative group represents the views of the staff on various matters which affect the welfare and well-being of the staff and they meet twice a year. A formal grievance procedure can be invoked by any member of staff.

The Association has continued to give full and fair consideration to applications for employment made by disabled persons, having regard to their respective aptitudes and abilities. The Association's policy includes, where practicable, the continued employment of those who may become disabled during their employment. Equal training facilities are provided for disabled as for other employees in the job function in which they are employed.

8. Members of the Council

The names of the Members of the Council, who are also Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity, are shown on *page 2*. Mr N King was appointed on 20 November 1996, Mr R G Chapman retired on 9 July 1996 and sadly Mr J D Webster died on 19 December 1996.

Members of the Council do not receive any remuneration for their services to the Association.

9. Charitable Grants

During the year 42 grants were made to charities and other organisations, totalling approximately £480,000.

Approved by the Council on 25 March 1997 and signed on its behalf by

Chairman

W Robertson

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Responsibilities of Members of Council

Company law requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Association's state of affairs at the end of the year and of its financial activities for that period. In preparing these financial statements the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume the Association will continue in business.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities.

Report of the Auditors to the Members of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

We have audited the financial statements set out on pages 7 to 13 which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out on page 6.

Respective responsibilities of Members of Council and Auditors

As described on this page, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of the Association's financial statements. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those financial statements and report our opinion to you.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Members of Council in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Association's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the financial statements.

Unqualified opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs as at 31 December 1996 and of the incoming resources and resources expended, including income and expenditure, for the fear ended on that date and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies banks see that

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25 March 1997

Clark Whitehill
Chartered Accountants
and Registered Auditor

Accounting Policies

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The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these Financial Statements are as follows

1. Basis of Accounting

- (a) The Financial Statements of the Association have been prepared using the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets, and are drawn up in accordance with the new statement of recommended practice (The Charities SORP) and other applicable accounting standards. The format of the Income Statement has been changed this year in order to show a true and fair view of the incoming resources and resources expended, in accordance with the Charities SORP.
- (b) Details of subsidiaries are included in note 9 to these Financial Statements. They are not considered to be material and therefore consolidated Financial Statements have not been prepared.

2. Income

The income of voluntary fund raising branches after deducting incidental expenses is accounted for when received. Legacies are accounted for when notified, providing the amount can be ascertained. Investment income is accounted for gross when due, except in the case of deposit interest which is dealt with on an accruals basis.

3. Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Headquarters and regional centre expenses are allocated to the various expenditure headings broadly on the basis of time spent by staff in each activity. The cost of irrecoverable Value Added Tax is included with the item of expense to which it relates. Depreciation is allocated over the expenditure headings on the basis of use of the assets concerned.

4. Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated in the Balance Sheet at cost, less depreciation at the following annual rates.

Freehold Land	Nil
Buildings	2%
Furniture & Equipment	10% - 20%
Motor Vehicles	25%
Computers	33-33%
The cost of freehold land is estimated by Council.	Council.

5. Investments

Investments are stated in the balance sheet at market value.

6. Stocks

Stocks have been valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

7. Pension Costs

The Association operates a defined benefit pension scheme for the majority of its employees. This is funded by contributions from the Association at rates determined by independent professionally qualified actuaries. These contributions are invested separately from the Association's assets by trustees and are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities so as to spread the cost over the anticipated lives of employees in the Scheme.

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 1996

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	1006	1005
Incoming Resources		£000	£000
Voluntary Income			
Fundraising Branches		3,803	4,132
Donations and Other Income		2,371	2,347
Legacies		19,733	17,318
Total Voluntary Income		25,907	23,797
Other Income			
investment Income	1	7,063	6,522
Income from Trading Subsidiary		505	624
Turnover £2,214,000 [(1995 £2, 564,500)]			,
Total Other Income		7,568	7,146
Total Incoming Resources		33,475	30,943
Direct Charitable Expenditure Guide Dog Related Services	t		
Breeding and Training		11,423	10,289
Owner Services		12,109	10,944
Other Expenditure		4,564	4,285
		28,096	25,518
Additional Services and Facilities		7,266	6,340
Total Direct Charitable Expenditure		35,362	31,858
Other Expenditure			
Fundraising and Publicity		6,456	6,587
Management and Administration		2,194	1,984
Total Other Expenditure		8,650	8,571
Total Resources Expended		44,012	40,429
Net Outgoing Resources for the Year		(10,537)	(9,486)

Net Increase in Funds for the Year	Total Gains on Investments	Unrealised	Gains on Investments	Net Outgoing Resources for the Year	
6					Notes
417	10,954	6,698	, 176	(10,537)	1996 £000
9,938	19,424	16,908	י ני	(9,486)	1995 £000

The accounting policies on page 6 and the notes on pages 10 to 13 form part of these Financial Statements.

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 December 1996

	Notes	1996 £000	1995 £000
Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities	(a)	(5,406)	(3,914)
Investing Activities			
Payments to Acquire Fixed Assets		(8,056)	(5,520)
Receipts from Sale of Fixed Assets		289	313
Acquisition of Investments		(63,192)	(56,302)
Proceeds from Investment Sales		75,883	67,144
ž Ť		4,924	5,635
(Decrease)/Increase in			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	(b)	(482)	1,721

		(b) Analysis of Changes in Cash and Cash Equipolate
(3,914)	(5,406)	Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities
904	271	Increase in Creditors
548	888	Decrease in Debtors
(21)	(282)	(Increase) in Stocks
(97)	(160)	Profit on sale of Fixed Assets
4,238	4,414	Depreciation Charges
(9,486)	(10,537)	Net Outgoing Resources
		(a) Reconciliation of Net Outgoing Resources to Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities
		Notes to Cash Flow Statement
£000	£000	
1995	1996	

ant toward

4,144		
3,868	3,481 3,868	Money Market Deposits
276	181	Balances at Bankers
		(c) Analysis of Balances in Cash and Cash Equivalents
4,144	3,662	Balance at 31 December 1996 3,662 4,144
1,721	(482)	(Decrease)/Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents
2,423	4,144	Balance at 1 January 1996
		(b) Analysis of Changes in Cash and Cash Equivalents

2. Resources Expended (continued)

d) Staff Costs (continued)

Other pension costs have been determined under SSAP24 (accounting for pension costs). A valuation of the pension scheme was carried out by the actuaries on 1 January 1994 and showed a deficit of £2,550,000 using the defined accrued benefit method to determine contributions and the main actuarial assumptions that the return on investments will exceed salary increases by 2% pa and that equity dividends will increase by 4% pa. The deficit was paid to the Scheme during 1994 and is being written off together with deficits arising from previous valuations, over the estimated remaining service lives of members. The balance of £2,920,000 to be amortised in future years is included under the heading debtors in the balance sheet.

The average number of persons employed by the Association during the year ended 31 December 1996 was 1,159 (1995 1,043). A proportion are employed on a part-time basis, and for this reason the following analysis by job function is also expressed in full-time equivalents.

		1996	1995	95
	Actual	Full Time Equivalents	Actual	Full Time Equivalents
Technical	692	635	612	557
Domestic and Ancillary	147	135	162	148
Fundraising and Publicity	54	50	54	50
Administration and Clerical	266	244	215	195
	1,159	1,159 1,064 1,043 950	1,043	950

The emoluments of 15 employees exceeded £40,000 of which 11 were in the band £40,000 to £50,000, 3 were in the band £50,000 to £60,000 and 1 in the band £80,000 to £90,000. Exceptional payments have been made to two former members of management on leaving the Association amounting to £59,000.

1996

1995

38,879	4,314	34,565	Net Book Value 31 December 1995
42,392	4,205	38,187	Net Book Value 31 December 1996
25,041	7,762	17,279	31 December 1996
(748)	(748)	•	Disposals
4,414	1,897	2,517	Provision for Year
21,375	6,613	14,762	1 January 1996
			Depreciation
67,433	11,967	55,466	31 December 1996
(877)	(877)		Disposals
8,056	1,917	6,139	Additions
60,254	10,927	49,327	1 January 1996
			Cost
			3. Tangible Fixed Assets
£000	£000	£000	
Total	Furniture Equipment Vehicles and Computers	Freehold Properties	

Included within Freehold Properties are purchases of properties for use primarily by other charities. These include The Bristol Royal Society for the Blind, The Edinburgh Society for the Teaching and Welfare of the Blind, and The Talking Newspaper Association of the UK. In addition, there is a payment to a Housing Association under an agreement whereby the Association has the right to nominate tenants to occupy units of sheltered accommodation. The total cost of these purchases is £2,124,000 with a net book value of £1,628,000 at 31 December 1996.

Furniture, equipment, vehicles and computers includes Braille printing and binding equipment purchased at a cost of £539,000 for use by the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The net book value of these assets at 31 December 1996 was £34,000.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

	1996	1995
4. Investments	£000	£000
a) Movement in investments during the year		
Market value at beginning of the year	146,158	137,576
Acquisitions	63,192	56,302
Disposals	(71,627)	(64,628)
Net uplift on revaluation	869'9	16,908
Market value at end of the year 146,158	144,421	146,158

	41	1996	-	1995
	Market	Cost	Market	Cost
	Food	£000	food	food
Analysis of Investments)))	
Listed Investments				
United Kingdom	85,831	65,462	97,260	76,819
Overseas	1,746	1,771	16,747	13,577
	87,577	67,233	114,007	96,396
Unit Trusts	49,909	45,124	26,507	21,492
Unlisted Investments	55	52	47	82
Cash Deposits	6,411	6,411	5,127	5,127
Investment in Subsidiaries	69†	503	470	503
	144,421	119,322	146,158	117,600

<u>a</u>

the units and the value of unlisted investments is as determined by Council, all as at recognised stock exchange, the value of unit trusts is the mid bid and offer price of The market value of listed investments is the mid-market price quoted on a close of business at the year end.

Managers Limited, 33KWS - Overseas Fund, and the other amounting to £8,896,000 Included in unit trusts are two holdings representing more than 5% of the total value of the investments, one a holding of £16,153,000 in the Mercury Fund in the 33KWS - Growth and Recovery Income Fund.

	1996	1995
. Debtors	£000	E000
Tax Recoverable	232	456
Due from Subsidiary Companies	49	434
Other Debtors	3,373	3,329
Pension Cost Prepayment	2,920	3,391
Accrued Legacy Income	1,378	1,289
Other Prepayments	Ñ	241
	8,2	52 9,140

which is interest free and repayable in five equal instalments every five years from 1999. The pension cost prepayment includes £2,741,000 to be amortised from 1998 onwards. Association. Also included is a secured loan of £1,300,000 to the Animal Health Trust Within other debtors are amounts falling due in more than one year. They include non-interest bearing equity loans to employees for housing assistance amounting to £1,657,000 (1995 £1,744,000) of which £40,000 is to a former officer of the

	1996	1995
6. Movement in General Fund	£000	£000
Opening Balance		
General Fund	167,100	168,200
Unrealised Investment Gains	28,558	16,231
	195,658	184,431
Prior Year Adjustment		
Legacy income accrued at 31 December 1995		
on change of accounting policy	•	1,289
Opening Balance Restated	195,658	185,720
Net Increase in Funds for the Year	417	9,938
Closing Balance	196,075	195,658

There are no material restricted or endowment funds.

	1996	1995
Capital Commitments	£000	£000
Confracted Commitments 1,054 3	1,054	380

8. Legacies

to reflect the change of accounting policy. cash received basis. A prior year adjustment of £1,289,000 (see note 6) has been made income. The recognition of legacy income is now on an accruals basis, rather than a During the year the Association changed its accounting policy in relation to legacy

for future amounts receivable. financial statements include payments received on account but not any estimates Association for which the full amount receivable cannot be ascertained. These As at 31 December 1996 970 residuary legacies had been notified to the

Subsidiaries

the Blind Association (Trading Company) Limited, GDBA Community Care Trustees) Limited. Services Limited, GDBA Recreational Services Limited and GDBA (Pension Fund The Association holds the whole of the issued share capital of The Guide Dogs for

scheme and does not carry on a business. and GDBA (Pensions Fund Trustees) Limited acts as a trustee for the pension of Covenant. The turnover of GDBA Community Care Services Limited was for the previous year. GDBA Recreational Services Limited was dormant for the year £263,000 (1995 £240,000) and resulted in a breakeven position for the year and also (1995 £25,000) after paying £505,000 (1995 £624,000) to the Association under Deed Limited during the year was £2,214,000 (1995 £2,564,000) and its loss was £1,000 The turnover of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Trading Company)

9. Subsidiaries (continued)

Transactions with subsidiaries during the year were as follows:

,	
83	Transfer of Creditors on 1 January 1996
67	Transfer of Current Assets on 1 January 1996
	GDBA Recreational Services Limited
263	Charge for salary costs
	GDBA Community Care Services Limited
505	Deed of Covenant received
1,227	Purchases
48	Charge for management expenses
	(Trading Company) Limited
	The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
£000	
1996	

The investment of the Association in Subsidiaries amounting to £469,000 is represented by net assets as follows:

470	469
1,136	585
434	Due to the Association 67
4	Accruals 4
216	Taxation 174
482	Creditors 340
1,606	1,054
795	Bank Balances 465
174	Debtors 68
495	· Stocks 360
142	Tangible Fixed Assets 161
£ooo	£000
1995	1996

Headquarters and Registered Office:

Hillfields, Burghfield Common, Reading, Berkshire RG7 3YG Tel: (0118) 983 5555 Fax: (0118) 983 5433

Regional Centres: small centres shown in italics

Eastern

Findlay House Manor Road, Woodford Green Essex IG8 8ER Tel: (0181) 506 1515 Fax: (0181) 505 1644 Controller: Brian Humphreys

ent

Nina Frigenti House 46 Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone Kent ME14 5LP Tel: (01622) 695503 Fax: (01622) 664163 Manager: Peter Smith

Widlands

Edmondscote Manor
Warwick New Road, Leamington Spa
Warwickshire CV32 6AM
Tel: (01926) 337244
Fax: (01926) 832731
Controller: Hugh Thomas

North East Midlands

472 Mansfield Road, Mapperley Park Nottingham NG5 2EL Tel: (0115) 985 6056 Fax: (0115) 985 7346 Manager: Peter Roe

North East

Freda Valentine House Highfield Road, Middlesbrough Cleveland TS4 2QW Tel: (01642) 232666 Fax: (01642) 230369 Controller: Dave Duncan

South Yorkshire

Tapton Cliffe

276 Fulwood Road Sheffield, South Yorkshire S10 3BN Tel: (0114) 267 0340 Fax: (0114) 268 7155 Manager: Val Woolrich

North West

Nuffield House Lowndes Street, Bolton BL1 4QA Tel: (01204) 495111 Fax: (01204) 848 512 Controller: Bob Steele

Merseyside

Muriel Crooke House Youens Way, East Prestcot Road Liverpool L14 2EP Tel: (0151) 221 0999 Fox: (0151) 221 0998 Manager: Graham Smith

Scotland

Princess Alexandra House Dundee Road, Forfar Angus DD8 1JA Tel: (01307) 463531 Fax: (01307) 465233 Controller: John Duncan

West of Scotland

Macpherson House 44 Hamilton Street, Larkhall Strathclyde ML9 2AU Tel: (01698) 884647 Fax: (01698) 886594 Manager: Kenny Hamilton

Northern Ireland Lanesborough House

Luresbordayn rouse 15 Sandown Park South, Knock Belfast BT5 6HE Tel: (01232) 471453 Fax: (01232) 655097 Manager: Alan Moneypenny

Southern

Folly Court
Barkham Road, Wokingham
Berkshire RG41 4BT
Tel: (0118) 979 1911
Fax: (0118) 989 1603
Controller: Ray Smith

South Hampshire

Armstrong House Bassett Avenue, Southampton Hampshire SO16 7NL Tel: (01703) 768800 Fax: (01703) 768811 Manager: Becki Oldfield

South West

Cleve House Exwick Lane, Exeter Devon EX4 2AR Tel: (01392) 72967 Fax: (01392) 423949 Controller: Alan Brooks

South Wales

Trevillian House
40 Cathedral Road
Cardiff, South Glamorgan CF1 9LL
Tel: (01222) 395455
Fax: (01222) 653123
Manager: Chris Floyd