

Dear Fellow Lions.

PCC Lion Philip Goodier CPFA would like to share a newsletter & a How 2 Guide for Spectacle Recycling.

### **Sight Awareness and Recycle for Sight update.**

Dear Fellow Lions.

Latest updates concerning spectacle recycling from National Headquarters. We now have two recycling centres in Chichester and Birmingham. Why two?? The organisation known as Vision Aid Overseas was the biggest name in the recycling of spectacles world. During Covid they decided to cease recycling spectacles and that elevated Lions Clubs to the number one slot, almost overnight. The demand then placed on Chichester grew ten fold and the team raised the alarm that they were struggling to cope with the huge numbers of glasses being sent to them. The Council of Governors agreed, we had to act and in consultation with Chichester and the team working at HQ and the Global Service Team it was decided we would open a second recycling centre at HQ. The team from Chichester helped to get the first floor of HQ set up as a new recycling centre and a visit to Chichester from the HQ Office Manager helped to understand more on the processes involved.

Spectacle processing at National Headquarters (HQ) has been operational since 1st October 2021 & goes from strength to strength. HQ receive spectacles from 105CW, CN & N. Our National Headquarters are working, in collaboration with Chichester Lions who continue to receive spectacles from the other districts. Clubs can either deliver their consignments to HQ themselves or have them delivered (at the clubs own cost, unfortunately). Bearing in mind the numbers involved, please ensure that your club contacts HQ (0121 441 4544) beforehand to arrange a mutually agreeable date. A team of local volunteers has been recruited and trained to help sort the spectacles in Birmingham.

What happens to the spectacles? Some of the spectacles we collect will be recycled to have a second use as they are broken or unsuitable spectacles. Not one single pair of spectacles is sent to landfill. Some of the spectacles we receive go on to help children and adults in developing countries to enjoy a better quality of life. Countries that have received spectacles from Lions include Brazil, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Greece, Amazon River Basin, Nepal, Ethiopia, Jordan, Cuba, Mongolia, Peru, Honduras, Guatemala, The Dominican Republic, Panama and Indonesia. Exactly as Chichester has done HQ will work with Medico in France to continue to get suitable spectacles moved on to those that need them. Brexit has been a new challenge but after meeting with the French District Governor that covers the area that homes Medico we know we are

all working together to find a solution to those challenges. In the meantime we are working with other Charities that ship various items abroad and they want to offer our spectacles to those that don't experience the standards of eye care that we have at our disposal. Spectacles sorted in HQ have already been shipped to The Gambia, Chad and Tanzania. Many will experience corrected vision for the first time, enabling them to read, attend school, gain employment and take care of their families.

In the same way that Chichester processes its spectacles any scrap materials from unsuitable spectacles yield some funds which in time will generate funds to help support the sorting operation and will enable us to provide financial support to vision related projects in the UK and overseas.

Your support in donating your spectacles will go a long way to play a key role in the success of this most worthwhile project. If as a Club you are collecting spectacles please do report this activity on your MyLion account. When sending your spectacles in to HQ please do not include spectacle cases or the cleaning cloths but, incidentally, some clubs have raised a little money from selling designer cases at their events.

HQ will also take hearing aids, which are duly refurbished or stripped for parts & will subsequently benefit the most in need.

There are recycling boxes and stickers available at HQ... please talk to the team - we are all working together to ensure this wonderful service project grows from strength to strength. The work of our Club members collecting spectacles from so many outlets ensures that we are not the well kept secret that many believe us to be. Google the following question - How to recycle old glasses? Lions Clubs pop up as the answer to the question.

Lastly, on the recycling theme, HQ also collect; foreign coinage + pre-decimal British coins, plastic bottle tops, tablet blister-packs (empty) & bras! These can be slipped into a box of spectacles & itemised on the label.

We thank all our Clubs working so hard to collect spectacles, hearing aids and other items we still truly are 'Knights of the blind'.

## **How 2 Guide**

### **TITLE: SPECTACLE RECYCLING**

Collection and recycling of spectacles. As Lions we wish to improve the sight and life chances of people by collecting and recycling glasses. This

project equally impacts Environmental issues as we have made a commitment that none of the collected spectacles will go to land fill.

## **How 2 Guide:**

As Lions we wish to improve the sight and life chances of people by collecting and recycling glasses.

Some suggestions of where to collect glasses:

- Opticians
- Charity Shops
- Undertakers
- Recycling Centres / Municipal tips
- Hospitals - Identify where to place collection boxes and agree this with manager.
- Care homes
- Schools

## **Method**

- Place spectacle boxes (swing bins are good) labelled with: Spectacle Recycling, your Club name and contact details (including email, website and telephone number).
- Leave your contact details for the participant to liaise with you for collections and/or agree to collect and empty the bins on a regular basis.

Once collected – there are two possibilities. If your Club is in District CW, CN or N send the glasses to our National Headquarters - Birmingham.

Please let the team in Birmingham know when they can expect your spectacles. All other Districts will send spectacles to Chichester Lions Club.

Please note for both of our recycling centres they prefer not to receive the cases, just the spectacles and sunglasses. They will accept broken spectacles as well.

Sadly, there is no free Parcel Force collections any longer, so liaise with both Chichester and Birmingham to see what is the most cost -effective way to send your spectacles – if the opportunity arises you may like to deliver your spectacles in person.

Ensure your Club Secretary records the date and how many spectacles were sent every month on MyLCI.

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To finish, I would like to share that, although Specsavers are no longer partnering Vision Aid Overseas, there are a growing number of

Specsavers stores willing to support their local Lions clubs with spectacle recycling. May I encourage clubs to approach their local Specsavers & discuss the possibility of depositing a lions collection box. There is the forthcoming opportunity to take boxes of spectacles to the MD Convention at the end of the month (if doing so, please notify HQ, 0121 4414544, to give numbers).

With the warmer weather approaching & club events being planned – is there an opportunity for the Sight Awareness Display to augment your event? Email me at [sight@lions105cw.org.uk](mailto:sight@lions105cw.org.uk)

Kind regards,  
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