



NATIONAL HQ - BIRMINGHAM

Recycle for Sight

UPDATE · UPDATE · UPDATE · UPDATE

I am pleased to send you all an update regarding the Lions Spectacle Recycling from your National Headquarters. This update highlights our ongoing efforts and achievements in getting glasses to those who desperately need them whilst promoting sustainable practices to improve our environmental consciousness through the recycling of eyewear.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 1. Collection Initiatives:** We thank all the Clubs who are working so hard to continue to collect spectacles across the country. Our dedicated volunteer team at HQ have successfully sorted at least one million pairs of spectacles this year alone and that number is increasing.
- 2. Community Engagement:** We have actively engaged with the local community by introducing volunteers to sort the spectacles through local awareness campaigns and invitations to visit the sorting operation. This has led to a positive shift in public perception of Lions and how they serve generally and people who might not think they had an opportunity to volunteer are now doing so.
- 3. Partnerships:** The Lions Recycling Programme has established working relationships with opticians, optometrists, eyewear retailers, and community centres to enhance our collection network. You, our members have worked so hard on forging these relationships and again we thank you for your continued efforts. These collaborations have meant you are very visible when collecting spectacles and hearing aids meaning we are no longer 'a well kept secret'.
- 4. Processing and Recycling:** The recycling that takes place in Lions Clubs HQ offers volunteering opportunities to local people ranging from school age to those well into retirement age. We have recently organised a weekly visit from a school whose pupils have various degrees of learning difficulties and disabilities. These young people want to volunteer and the glasses project offers them an opportunity to do some basic sorting of glasses and allows them the chance to volunteer in their community.
- 5.** Any materials recovered from sorting spectacles are directed towards responsible recycling methods, minimizing the environmental impact. All waste material that cannot be used is collected and incinerated to supply energy for the National Grid. We do obtain a small donation from some metals within the spectacle recycle process which enables us to cover some costs and overheads.
- 6.** We have managed to send glasses to Mali, Ghana, Chad, The Gambia, Tanzania, Nigeria and Ukraine. We have recently sent 35 boxes of glasses to the Ukraine and 5 boxes of hearing aids. We will be sending glasses to Medico France – which involves a cost sadly but we can find no way of transporting the glasses free of charge but we would like to continue the relationship with Medico and send some of our spectacles over to the Lions French operation.
- 7.** Please continue to follow the process and send glasses in during the first week of each month - we do appreciate there must be some flexibility in that process but this has allowed us to get on with sorting during the other three weeks of each month. Again many thanks for phoning in to book a slot which is really assisting our own organisation and knowing when glasses are arriving.
- 8. Educational Programmes:** We have successfully visited schools locally to make the younger generation aware of the importance of recycling eyewear and its contribution to sustainability and other environmental issues. Once we are able to visit schools we have the opportunity to talk about the many other fantastic Youth Projects Lions can offer to schools.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE STRATEGIES:

- 1. Public Awareness:** We have a new website www.lionsrecycling.co.uk. The website explains where our glasses move on to and the success this programme has had nationally.
- 2.** We plan to intensify our visibility on various digital platforms and visit more community events to reach a broader audience now that we have the website in place. Again that gives the opportunity to talk to a wider audience about the work of Lions generally and our other great projects.
- 3. Logistics:** Streamlining the logistics of eyewear collection and transportation will be a focus in the coming months. We know there are many glasses still in various locations around the country and we will try and identify where they are and by communicating together we can try to formulate a planned approach to receiving the glasses into National HQ.

The Lions Glasses Recycling Initiative at National HQ has made significant strides in promoting eyewear recycling and environmental responsibility. We have addressed a number of challenges and the project continues to grow. We appreciate fully your hard work and your ongoing support for this wonderful project which not only gives sight to those who might otherwise be blind but also in our responsibilities environmentally. Please remember we don't just recycle glasses and hearing aids we also recycle foreign coins and old currency for our Gift for Living Project and Bras where we work in partnership with Breast Cancer UK, postage stamps for baby charity SANDS The Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity.

We will continue to update you and please have a look at the new website and may we wish you all

Season's Greetings!

The information in this update relates to the Birmingham recycling operation and we should not forget the wonderful work carried out by the Lions in Chichester - if you want to know about the Chichester operation then please view their website <https://www.chilions.org.uk/specs.htm>

