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Moorfields Eye Charity  
162 City Road  
London  
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## My story

**Samuel Diamond**, 26, has been a patient at Moorfields since he was a child, and requires ongoing treatment for a chronic eye condition. He and his family are taking part in Moorfields' new mass-participation event, **Eye to Eye, on Sunday 22 March** to raise vital funds to support life-changing research into the prevention, treatment and cure of major eye diseases.



"I was born with very high myopia, which progressed as I got older. I started wearing glasses aged two. As the years passed, the lenses got thicker and I was a regular visitor at Moorfields, having check-ups, refractions, dilations, scans, retinal photography, dye injected into my veins, and endless pairs of glasses.

"Aged 11, I suffered a retinal detachment in one eye. The operation was a success and my sight was saved, thanks to a specialist team at Moorfields. Disaster struck again and I suffered a second detachment in the same eye. Again Moorfields came to my rescue. But my eye was fragile – I haemorrhaged and started to lose my sight. Fluid had built up behind the eye and was obstructing my vision. As a result I was one of the first people to have Avastin injections at Moorfields' clinical trials unit, which saved some of the sight in my right eye.

"I left school having missed taking my GCSEs and later joined Central St Martins. It was a challenging time – my vision was

deteriorating, and I was very self-conscious and embarrassed. I hit a low point.

*"Behind the scenes, Moorfields is conducting crucial research into eye conditions, and developing new procedures and treatments."*

"Then an amazing opportunity arose; I had a ground-breaking operation to implant special lenses inside my eyes, which meant that I no longer needed contact lenses or glasses – it was life changing!

"Today, my field of vision is still restricted and so is my lifestyle – I can't do contact sports because a blow to the head or face could result in retinal detachment. I also run a big risk of losing my sight, but I have developed coping mechanisms in my battle for sight.

"I will always be a regular patient at Moorfields. I can never thank the hospital enough for the care, dedication and service they provide. Behind the scenes, Moorfields is conducting crucial research into eye conditions, and developing new procedures and treatments.

"I'm really looking forward to taking part in Eye to Eye, and can't think of a more worthy cause."

**To find out more about Eye to Eye, or to register, contact: 020 7566 2486 or email [eye2eye@moorfields.nhs.uk](mailto:eye2eye@moorfields.nhs.uk)**



Samuel, aged three

### Events diary 2015

**Eye to Eye** 22 March

**Three Cities Cycle** 27–31 May  
**Edinburgh Marathon Festival** 30–31 May

**London to Paris open cycle** 20–24 May  
11–14 June (three-day challenge)  
15–19 July

#### Great Swim series

Great North Swim – 12–14 June  
Great East Swim – 20 June  
Great Manchester Swim – 4 July  
Great London Swim – 18 July  
Great Scottish Swim – 29 August

#### Prudential RideLondon – Surrey 100

2 August (see page three)

**Ride 24 – Newcastle to London** 22–23 August

**London to Brighton Cycle** 6 September

**Bournemouth Marathon Festival** 3–4 October

**Tandem skydive** (year round)

**For further information and to find out how you can get involved, contact: 020 7566 2486 or email [eyecharity@moorfields.nhs.uk](mailto:eyecharity@moorfields.nhs.uk)**



Update on how charitable support is making a difference Issue 6 Spring 2015

# Visibility

### In this issue

Research success into retinitis pigmentosa

Sign up for Prudential RideLondon for Moorfields

Samuel Diamond's story

## Climbing Mount Fuji for Moorfields

Inspired by the care and treatment that his son Craig, 29, has received at Moorfields, **Andy Blackwell** climbed Mount Fuji in Japan in August 2014 to raise vital funds for the hospital.

A long-term patient at Moorfields, Craig first underwent treatment – cataract surgery – in 2005; and in 2013, the lens implanted to treat the cataracts in his right eye became dislocated and further surgery was necessary. Craig also has a rare condition called iridoschisis, whereby the front and back layers of the iris become separated. Although he has responded well to treatment and his eye health is currently stable, he will require regular check-ups and additional surgeries may also be needed.



Andy at Mount Fuji

"After everything the Moorfields team has done for my son, I really wanted to give something back to support the ongoing work of the hospital," explained Andy. "They also provided great care to my mother when she was alive. We have always been treated like family and know that Craig is in safe hands.

"The staff have been excellent throughout – total professionals and very caring. We will always be indebted to Moorfields."

Climbing Mount Fuji – the tallest mountain in Japan at nearly 4,000 metres – involved a demanding 10-hour ascent over two days. "I wanted to do something that would push me to my limits – and beyond – and this ticked all the boxes," said Andy. "It was one of the most mentally and physically demanding things I've ever done. The descent was

harder than the climb itself, and at the summit it was freezing cold, windy and raining."

*"I really wanted to give something back to support the ongoing work of the hospital"*

Despite the challenges, the sense of achievement and spectacular views made it all worthwhile: "It's a strange feeling – climbing and seeing clouds below you. There is a saying: a wise man climbs Mount Fuji once in his life – only a fool climbs it twice. I think I'll stay wise, but will be looking for new challenges so I can continue to support Moorfields!"

**Andy has so far raised £1,553 for Moorfields. To support his fundraising efforts, visit: [uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AndyBlackwell](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AndyBlackwell)**

## Supporting research into retinoblastoma

Thanks to generous support, Moorfields Eye Hospital is pioneering research into the treatment of **retinoblastoma**, the most common inherited cancer among children.

Accounting for around 11% of all cancers developing in the first year of life, retinoblastoma is a rare type of eye cancer that affects children younger than five. If untreated, it can invariably be fatal.

Current treatments include chemotherapy, laser thermotherapy, cryotherapy, localised radiotherapy, external beam radiotherapy or surgery. Multiple treatments, including eye removal, although effective, have a lifelong psychological impact.

Thanks to donors Helena Boas, Tom Sikorski and Blue Water Energy, specialists Mandeep Sagoo (consultant ophthalmic surgeon at Moorfields) and Prof Shin-ichi Ohnuma (UCL Institute of Ophthalmology) are leading

research using next-generation sequencing technology. They hope to develop more effective and less invasive treatments and enable earlier diagnosis, with the aim of targeted therapy.

Helena and Tom said: "We are delighted to be supporting this research and are particularly excited about the potential for rapid translation into clinical practice."



## Update on recent appeals

A recent appeal has raised nearly £70,000 for research into inherited corneal disease, which could lead to simpler, faster and more effective treatments in the future.

As well as supporting the laboratory techniques that underpin the research, funds raised will enable the genetic testing of up to 400 patients.

Ophthalmic consultant Stephen Tuft said: "On behalf of the patients and their children who are participating in this research, we would like to thank you all very much indeed for your kind support."

We are also extremely grateful for the funds raised to replace

two broken cell culture incubators in the Sir Jules Thorn Stem Cell Research Unit.

The surplus raised will support a three-year PhD study on stem cells, which will focus on developing new therapies for complex blinding eye diseases of the cornea.

Moorfields Eye Charity received a very positive response to our two appeals in 2014 – thank you very much to all who generously responded.



A cell culture incubator at Moorfields

## Success of research into retinitis pigmentosa

Researchers at the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology, led by Prof Alison Hardcastle, have been developing potential treatments for a form of retinitis pigmentosa, a disease of the eye that leads to loss of vision and blindness. This is caused by a fault in the RP2 gene that provides instructions for making a protein essential for normal vision.

A condition that mostly affects young boys, a significant number of Moorfields' RP2 patients have a genetic fault that tells the cell to stop making the protein too early.

Research has focused on developing treatments using drugs and stem cell technologies, and has succeeded in reversing problems associated with the genetic fault. "We could not have hoped for better results," said Prof Hardcastle. "We are able to show, for the first time, that these drugs may have a clinical application for preventing or slowing retinal degeneration in RP2 patients."

Prof Hardcastle and her team are very grateful to Adam and Debbie Ripley who have extended their support of this project for a further three years.

## Prudential RideLondon 2015

Moorfields Eye Charity has places remaining for this exhilarating 100-mile cycle event on **Sunday 2 August**. Join 20,000 cyclists on a scenic adventure through London and the Surrey hills.

Rob Aldous, Moorfields' director of fundraising, took part in last year's RideLondon event: "As someone who enjoys cycling, this was a great way to raise funds for eye research and mark 10 years working at the hospital. It's such a fantastic event – cycling on closed roads and being cheered on along the way."

**To sign up, contact: 020 7566 2486 or email [eyecharity@moorfields.nhs.uk](mailto:eyecharity@moorfields.nhs.uk)**

**[www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/ridelondon-surrey-100-2015](http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/ridelondon-surrey-100-2015)**

Focus on...

## Generous gift for Ealing

Glaucoma patients at Moorfields Eye Centre in Ealing are set to benefit from a generous donation from the Social Educational Welfare Association (SEWA). This local charity helps people in need in the Ealing, Hayes and Southall areas.

Mr Sharma, a trustee of SEWA and a patient at the clinic, presented a cheque for £1,000 to consultant ophthalmologist Mr Ian Murdoch, who accepted the donation on behalf of Moorfields Eye Charity just before Christmas on 22 December.

Staff hope to use the SEWA donation to purchase a Tono-Pen XL tonometer, a handheld instrument that provides intra-ocular pressure readings needed in the monitoring of glaucoma patients.

SEWA has previously provided funding for equipment in various hospitals in London.



## Support Moorfields Eye Charity

Please complete this Direct Debit form and seal and return to the FREEPOST address overleaf.

**Instructions to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit**  
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Service user number

Moorfields Eye Charity ref

**Name and postal address of your bank/building society**

To: the manager/bank/building society

Address:

Postcode:

**Instruction to your bank/building society**

Please pay Moorfields Eye Charity Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Moorfields Eye Charity and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s):

Date:

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I would like to support **Moorfields Eye Charity** with a monthly gift:

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Written confirmation of your Direct Debit Instruction will be sent to you within 10 working days and prior to first payment.

**Please note:** only the person responsible for the bank account details given here can sign this Direct Debit mandate. All the information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence by Moorfields Eye Charity in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive any further information from us, apart from any information you have specially requested.

*giftaid it*

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**If you would like to make a single donation by credit/debit card, please call 020 7566 2565. Thank you.**

**If you require this form in large print, please call 020 7566 2486**

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