

VIEWPOINT

NEWSLETTER



SPRING EDITION

March – May 2020

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A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The New Year has already begun busily at the Society and as well as providing the same services to support visually impaired people we are also looking at developing new ones.

This year we have to raise 1.4 million pounds to keep the Society running and this amount includes many forms of fundraising as we do not receive anything from the local authorities. In part, we rely on donations and legacies, and will soon be doing some work to increase this amount. But until then please remember us in your will.

We would like to hear from anyone who would like to have a FREE WILL written for them and in return leave something to the Society. Please call me on 01229 440556.

We rely on grants from various trusts and the Henry Smith Charity recently awarded the Society a grant that can be used to partially support the costs of the Vision Support Team. This is great news as the Team helps many visually impaired people in the local area and the numbers just keep increasing.

Our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer is doing really well at Furness General Hospital and we are engaging the Public Sector to help us secure her role. This has proved an invaluable initiative to highlight the services the third sector can offer someone when they leave the Eye Clinic.

Hopefully, this year we will be continuing to introduce activities that are of interest to our clients, but do get in touch if there is something you believe the Society could be offering.

Carl Hodge

CHILDRENS PROJECT

On Saturday 9th November 2019, the Younger Generations visited the National Children's Museum in Halifax, which is called Eureka!. Eureka is an extraordinary fun packed day out, aimed at kids aged 0-11. There are 6 unique zones to discover, each filled with hundreds of interactive exhibits designed to inspire enquiring minds to find out about themselves and the world around them.

In the all about me area, the children could look up a giant nose, scan a pregnant mums' tummy and find out what they would look like a few years from now. There were machines which could measure how tall you are, how far you can reach to the side, how far you can stretch up, how ears, noses and eyes work and how our digestive system works. The children particularly liked pressing the button which made the interactive digestive system burp!

In the Spark Gallery, the children were able explore digital exhibits and interactive light shows. There was a sound space where the children could help Orby the alien test and create sounds and also discover the different properties of sounds and how to make them. In the sound garden, there was a sensory area for younger children where they could explore how precious nature is, dress up, listen to global lullabies and design and free their own butterfly.

The museum had a creativity space for little ones, filled with colourful cushions to chill out on and an area to draw and make things. There was a desert discovery area where you could stroke a coyote, turn a giant crank, build an

oasis, explore it and learn about different sounds and smells in the desert.

In the living and working together zone – the children could explore a child sized town square complete with shops and a fountain. In the square the children could role play, whilst learning all about the world of work in a Halifax Bank, an M&S, a Transco road dig area, a garage and a car wash. There was even an old train carriage in the grounds where you could eat a packed lunch. In the home area the children were able to see how items in a bathroom, such as a toilet, shower and bath work. They could experiment in the play kitchen and chill out in the bedroom and light filled dream space.

Eureka was an amazing place to visit. There was so much to see, do, discover and learn about. The children really enjoyed their visit there.



On Sunday 15th December 2019 our younger members went to see the pantomime, Aladdin at The Forum. Before the performance Lee Winter had arranged for us all to go on a touch tour of the set. Daryl took us on a touch tour, where we got to see the set, some of the props and we met

a member of the cast too. The children could then relate what they had seen close up to what they might not be able to see too clearly from the audience.

The children got to touch the Giant Genie puppet and rub his lamp. They were able to see Widow Twanky's costumes close up and touch some of her elaborate wigs. The children also got to meet the actress who played the Slave of the Ring. She was wearing a beautiful orange and gold costume and asked the children if they would like to feel the material.



After the touch tour, we took our seats in the audience and watched the pantomime. It was brilliant. It was full of jokes for the children and one or two for the grown-ups. The cast threw sweets into the audience and ran into the audience squirting super soaker water pistols. Our families really enjoyed the afternoon, it was great fun.

Cath Rogerson

Children and Young Person's Coordinator

ACTIVITIES PROJECT

Since the last issue of Viewpoint the activities group have been ten pin bowling at Soul Bowl in Morecambe and lots of new, exciting things have entered the planning stage. The ten pin bowling was a great success with our highest number of visually impaired attendees to date. The day began with coach pick-ups in Barrow, Dalton and Haverthwaite then we headed straight to Soul Bowl in Morecambe, we had 5 lanes in total with over 20 people bowling. There was some fantastic bowling and some rather fun mishaps including backways balls and balls in the wrong lane. The trip was once again funded by Sport England for which we continue to be extremely grateful.

We have now booked and confirmed 2 residential trips to Yealand Old School, these residential trips are being organised with Vision of Adventure who are very excited to be working with us. The first trip is the 17th - 18th March and the second trip is 18th - 19th March, activities will include Kayaking, Walking and Archery with the possibility of some more activities being added in depending on the weather.

We are planning on organising a trip to Kendal dry ski slopes in the very near future, if anyone is interested please call 01229 440556 and let Claire Huddleston know, as numbers will be very limited.

Furthermore, we are pleased to announce the Cricket Tournament is now all fully booked for the 7th June at Barrow Cricket Club, team will be of mixed abilities and everyone will play to the same set of rules. The cost of entering a team will be £25, each team will be a maximum

number of 8 players, and every team will play a minimum of 2 games. If the tournament is cancelled due to bad weather then fun games will be held in the Cricket Club House and no refunds will be issued on the team cost. If you would like any more information or would like to enter a team please contact Claire Huddleston for more information and programs of play will be released nearer the time. We are also planning on having the Tandem bikes at the Cricket Club on this day so people can have a look and if anyone wants to try them they will be available.

We have recently purchased a selection of equipment including a Basketball ball, Target game, Octoband, Bowls and some circuit equipment. This will give us the opportunity to provide a variety of fun games that everyone can take part in and we are looking into someone local providing some simple HlIT exercises for us to do. We will be able to do some of these at the centre but as the weather gets warmer we will be looking into having them set up outside at the Cricket Club. The Tandem bikes are still available if anyone would like to have a try then please contact the office and we will match you with a lead rider.

Claire Huddleston has been nominated for a Love Barrow Award for the Activities Project, and she has made it through to the finals if anyone would like to vote for her to win then please visit the Love Barrow Awards page to vote it would be a fantastic achievement for both herself and the society if she won.

The Sport England funding is due to run out at the beginning of May, plans are currently being put in place to apply for more funding so we can continue a variety of activities.

IN YOUR POCKET

In your pocket is world's first totally voice operated smart phone. It is specifically designed for people with vision impairment and it makes accessing newspapers, talking books and podcasts very simple.

On Demand – listen to 100,000 talking books, 200 newspapers & magazines and 50,000 podcasts whenever you want.

Communicate – make phone calls & manage your contacts all using natural speech.

Anywhere – you can read while lying in bed, walking in the park or on the train or anywhere within the designated o2 network or an accessible Wi-Fi network.

Direct Access – it works straight out the box without needing the use of a computer.

Natural Speech – click a button and ask for what you want, such as “read me The Guardian” or “call Sherlock Holmes”

Price

Contract (term 2 years) £20.00 a month Pay As You Go £480.00. To purchase this device or find out more information, call into the Vision Support Centre.

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I first became a volunteer for Barrow & District Society for the Blind in 2008 supporting Trustee Board Meetings as an observer before formally registering as a Trustee a few years later when I decided to permanently settle in the area; laterally I have been honoured to serve as the Chair of the Trustee Board.

My dad was registered blind as a consequence of Glaucoma linked to a condition called Marfan's Syndrome. As his eyesight worsened, my dad struggled to live an independent life; struggled to get 'out and about' and lived his later years largely as a recluse. I wanted better for people like my dad and when I started in a Graduate role at BAE Systems Submarines it felt natural to volunteer with the Society.

As a Trustee my role is to work with other Trustees to ensure the charity has a clear strategy and our collective efforts are aligned to what we want to achieve. For me our collective purpose is clear – to support visually impaired people who live in our area to live an independent life.

The best part of being a Trustee is receiving feedback from our Management Team on how our staff and volunteers are supporting our clients across a diverse range of things - I am immensely proud of our staff, volunteers and clients for all they are able to do and everything they are able to achieve.

The charity has been able to do fantastic things in recent years including setting up the Young Person's Group offering activities to visually impaired children in our area,

converting the Blind Shop to a Vision Support Centre allowing a more direct support service and of course the Bradbury Sight Loss and Dementia village which opened at Ostley House last year aimed at providing improved stimulus for our residents. But it is not just about those big new things; I believe something as simple as a phone call from one of our volunteers offering support can make a huge difference to our clients.

I am minded of a conversation I had with a client a few years back about the importance of our volunteers. Granted the charity needs a level of income to sustain our current services, however, people make our charity, they allow us to drive our charity forward - volunteering for just a few hours a week will help us deliver those additional services, that additional support.

If someone reading this is 'up' for becoming a volunteer please do reach out for a conversation on how you can support our work.

Craig Anderson

**Chair of Trustee Directors - Barrow & District Society for
the Blind**

EYEDROPS

If anyone is experiencing problems administering eye drops after being discharged from the Eye Clinic or the hospital. Please get in touch with us at your earliest convenience on 01229 440556

VISION SUPPORT TEAM

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and New Year. It seems so long ago now and I am just glad that Spring is on its way.

As a lot of you will know, Emillie Voy resigned as Activities Co-ordinator. We were all very sad to see her go to pastures new but we wish her well in her new job. Emillie will be missed by everyone both staff and clients. We now have a new lady in post called Zoe Fell. Some of you will have met her already and I think she has settled into her new role with great enthusiasm. Emillie was a hard act to follow but I am sure Zoe will do just as well.

We will be holding our first Macular and Charles Bonnet Support group in March. If anyone would like to attend please get in touch. Normally it is held in Ulverston but as most of the people who attend travel from Barrow, it did seem more sensible to hold the meeting in Barrow. Anyone requiring transport please let us know. We will have more details about date and venue very soon.

The Kitchen Skills sessions are going very well. These are held monthly so, again, please get in touch for information if you would like to attend.

We are aware of making sure that all our clients are catered for and as such we hold groups in various venues. We know that it is difficult for people in Coniston and the surrounding area to travel to Ulverston so we would like to start a group in Coniston. Obviously, to do this we need to make sure that we will get a sufficient number of people to attend. The group would be held monthly and we would get

a variety of speakers to come along. Transport will be provided so please let us know if you are interested.

The groups are all running well but we really need some more members for our Ulverston group. This again is held once a month so please let us know if you wish to attend.

It won't be long before we have to organise our annual trip. For three years now we have been going to Rye Croft Hall and I know that everyone has enjoyed the day. We are thinking that we may change the venue this year and perhaps go somewhere nearer to home. I would be interested to hear your thoughts on this and any suggestions for venues.

Maggie Nelson

Vision Support Team Manager

NEW STOCK

We have a new range of lighting in the centre

Duo floor led lamp £44.00 Duo desk led lamp £40.00

These lamps are slim, flexible and sleek; they have two adjustable shades and a touch switch dimmer with 3 brightness levels.

Standbright modern, stylish, daylight led floor standing lamp easy to adjust flexible head and goose neck, convenient remote control easy to assemble. Reduces dazzle and glare, also has five levels of brightness plus five selectable led colour lights. This lamp is available in black and white £95.00

POETRY CORNER BY VAL BRYER

I thought my life was blighted
When I was registered partially sighted
But I was surprised to find
The loss had stimulated my mind
One day. I know this sounds absurd,
I mistook Dijon mustard for lemon curd
My face must have been a sight, when I took the first bite
But instead of throwing it in haste
I mixed them both into a paste
Now in stores they are sold as a delicacy
Used to stuff a duck, recommended by me
Next I looked at recent fashion
Some people follow it with a passion
But to tell you to rip your jeans at the knee
Seems ridiculous to me
Simply put your clothes on inside out
It makes people laugh there is no doubt
Or back to front if you prefer
It makes no difference if it's his or hers
Share your ideas with friends
Look forward to what the future sends
For though you might be going blind
You are still a valid member of mankind

COULD YOU SPARE SOME TIME **TO HELP US?**

We have several volunteering opportunities available at the Vision Support Centre and Ostley House. Volunteering can be an incredibly rewarding experience. You can give as much time as is appropriate to your lifestyle and we are always extremely grateful for anytime our volunteers have to spare.

Some of the volunteering opportunities that are available are listed below:

Driving (mileage is paid at 45p per mile)

In Store and Street Collectors

Helpers to assist with Social Groups

People to help with administration duties

Luncheon Club Volunteers (once monthly)

Bradbury Sight Loss & Dementia Village Volunteers

Fundraisers

Befrienders

Trustees

If you, a friend or family member are interested in becoming a much valued volunteer or would just like to find out more about the opportunities on offer please contact Cath Rogerson on 01229 440556

GROUPS AND CLUBS

Monday Group – Social – Every Monday night 7.00 pm – 9.00 pm at Spring Mount, Walney.

Tuesday Group – Craft work – Every Tuesday 2.00pm – 3.30pm.

Thursday Group – Bingo – Every Thursday - 2.00pm. – 4.00pm at Station View, Barrow.

Ulverston Group – Social – meets every third Wednesday at 1.30pm – 3.30pm - Neville Street Methodist Church,

Barrow Luncheon Group – Last Wednesday of every month, assorted venues.

Dual Sensory Loss Support Group – Meets the third Monday of the month - 1.30pm – 3.00pm at the Vision Support Centre.

Millom Group – Social – every Friday 1.00.p.m – 3.00pm at the Salvation Army Citadel, Nelson Street, Millom.

Grange Group – Social – First Wednesday of every month 2.00pm – 4.00pm at the Thornleigh Hotel, The Esplanade, Grange over Sands..

Men's Group – Social – first Wednesday of every month 1.30pm – 3.30pm at the Vision Support Centre.

Knit & Natter – Social Group – Every Tuesday at 10.00am – 12.00 pm. A chance to enjoy some knitting while having a chat at the Vision Support Centre.

Kitchen Skills please contact 01229 440556 for more information

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fun Coffee Morning/Children's Easter Egg Hunt at the Huddlehub, Biggar Bank - 1st April 2020 - 10.00am -2.00pm

**Keswick to Barrow/Coniston to Barrow – 2nd May 2020.
Come along and join our team of walkers.**

4 Mounds Sponsored Walk to be held in August – date to be confirmed. An 11 mile walk starting at the Slag Bank ending at Hoad Hill.

**Cross Bay Walk – 16th May 2020. Meet at 12.45 at Ashmeadows, Arnside. Walk to commence at 1.15pm
This walk takes approximately 4 hours to complete.**

**Comedy Night at Barrow Cricket Club – 30th May 2020.
Tickets £10.00 per person. Comedians appearing are:**

Mike Wilkinson: www.mikewilky.co.uk

Ben Lawes: www.benlawescomedy.co.uk

Steve Royle: www.steveroyle.com

Come along and have a laugh.

Cricket Tournament – 7th June 2020, 8 in a team, £25.00 per ticket.

Please contact info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk or on 01229 440556 if you are interested in any of the above events.

COLLECTIONS TAKING PLACE IN THE AREA

15th/16th February - Dalton Co-op, Store Collection.

22nd/23rd February - Ulverston Co-op, Store Collection.

28th/29th February - Morrisons, Store Collection.

7th/8th - Roose Rd, Plymouth Street & Oxford Street Co-op.

21st/22nd March - Asda (Barrow), Store Collection.

28th March - Millom Street Collection.

11th April - Grange- over-Sand's Street Collection.

25th April - Ulverston Street Collection.

30th May - Coniston & Hawkshead Street Collection.

19th/20th June - Booths Store Collection (Ulverston).

18th/ 19th July - Asda Store Collection (Barrow).

1st August - Millom Street Collection.

Please note that all of the proceeds from our collections are used solely to benefit people who have a visual impairment in our local area.

We receive no money from local government.

All donations are gratefully received.

REMEMBERING US IN YOUR WILL

“The Society was there for me when I needed it the most. I want it to be there for others”. Client

Sight loss can be frightening and isolating, the simplest tasks, such as finding your way around the kitchen can be daunting. Lifelong hobbies, reading, baking, looking at old photographs, seem impossible and stepping outside suddenly becomes overwhelming.

With the right support, people can adapt, maintain independence and live life to the full. A gift in your will ensures that this support will be there for generations to come. Please consider leaving a gift for Barrow & Districts Society for the Blind in your Will.

Thank you.

FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY

The Society relies on a variety of income to keep providing services in our local area for visually impaired people and one way is through friends of the Society.

By paying direct or setting up a standing order with your bank to pay the society £2, £5, £10, £20 or any other amount, you can make a real difference to our work. And if we can, we'll increase your donation through Gift Aid at no extra cost of yourself. So if you would like to become a friend please come and pick a leaflet or give us a call and we'll sort it out.

Thank you.



BARROW & DISTRICTS SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

Vision Support Centre

**67/69 Cavendish Street Barrow in
Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1QD**

01229 440556

info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk

Company Number: 3133015

Charity Number: 1051674