

# **VIEWPOINT**

## **NEWSLETTER**



**ISSUE 9**

**JUNE – AUGUST 2018**

## **A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Well the summer weather has arrived and we are enjoying a bit of hot weather for once. In the Vision Support Centre we are still getting use to our new facility and learning how to adjust the heating controls!**

**Things never keep still and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is affecting all organisations throughout the UK at the moment. Hopefully, you will have told us by now if you do, or do not, want us to keep your personal details, as we can only offer support to those who have completed and returned a signed form. The Vision Support Team is very busy at the moment assisting people to complete the many welfare benefit forms and seeking GDPR responses.**

**This month I attended a 'will' training course to find out if there is anything our charity could be doing to promote this form of fundraising. Leaving something to us in your will, can really be the Gift of a Lifetime. If you need any advice regarding the preparation of a will please get in touch with me.**

**Our residential home, Ostley House, has developed a new service. We now offer respite care for people who have sight loss and dementia and require a short period of care.**

**And finally, I want to promote the use of the Amazon products that allow the internet to be accessed for very little cost. For £39, the Amazon products can be life changing. If you need any more info please contact the Vision Support Centre. We can provide support to enable you to use be able to get connected to the internet and benefit from emailing, shopping, music and reading.**

## **AMAZON PRODUCTS**

The Amazon products are hands-free speakers you control with your voice. When you say “Alexa” this activates the unit and then you can gain access to the internet to play music, make calls, send and receive messages, provide information, news, sports scores, weather, making to-do lists, setting alarms, streaming podcasts, playing audiobooks, carrying out searches for information and other real-time information. The list is endless!

The prices below each photo are one-off ones to buy the units. The Dot has basic functions and the Echo provides better music.

To listen to music costs £3.99 per month

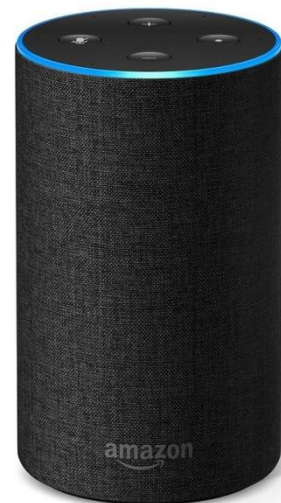
To listen to the audible books costs £7.99 per month.

There are other products you can link to these such as your central heating system, your lightening and your TV. The list goes on.

Once you have one of these products all you need to do is connect to the internet via broadband. And we are available to help you do this if you want assistance. Please give us a call if you want more information.



**Amazon Dot = £39.99**



**Amazon Echo = £89.99**

## **VISION SUPPORT TEAM**

Since the publication of the last newsletter we have started some of our new groups. The armchair aerobics group meet on the second Wednesday of the month 1 – 1.30pm but unfortunately has not been very well attended. The Knit and Natter group meets on a Tuesday 10 – 11am. This group again has not been well attended so if you are interested in either of these groups please come along. We hope to start our kitchen skills sessions in June and propose to have four weeks where kitchen equipment especially designed for the visually impaired will be demonstrated. After this we will hold monthly sessions where the equipment can be used to produce cakes etc. We held our first Blind football session on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Again, not well attended but greatly enjoyed by all who went. We hope to make this a monthly event so come along and give it a try.

We held our second Macular/Charles Bonnet support group in February and invited Edward Bebbington who talked about Charles Bonnet Syndrome and also the technique of eccentric viewing. Edward suffers from macular degeneration and uses this technique which involves maximising your useable vision. Several people made appointments to see Edward at the Vision Support Centre at a later date in order to find out more about this technique. We also invited Oliver Pearson from Healthwatch who told the group about what Healthwatch do and how they advocate for patients. The session was very lively and enjoyed by all. Apparently we are only one of two CBS support groups in the country.

One of our volunteers, Callum, has been working hard organising outdoor events. These include tandem bike riding and horse riding. If anybody is interested in any of our activities please get in touch and we will give you details about when these activities will be starting.

Our new VSO, Jackie Scott, has settled in really well to her role but I am very sad to say that she has suffered a major health problem and will be away from work for quite some time. We all wish her a speedy recovery.

The next Stepping Forward course will now be later in the year as we did not get sufficient numbers to make running it viable. Anybody wishing to take part please phone the office.

We do try to accommodate everybody and listen to any ideas people have but we do need people to participate. If you think you would enjoy any of the present or proposed activities please give it a try.

Maggie Nelson

## **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 the 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 to yourself.

So if you would like to become a Friend please pick up a leaflet or give us a call and we will sort it out. Thank you.

## **FOCUS DAYS**

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> June - 10am – 2.30pm Dolphin Technology & Wireless for the Blind.**

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July - 10am - 2pm David Brown (RNIB) talking about software for mobile phones & tablets.**

**In the centre we are also offering a special lighting area for clients to be able to use at their own leisure, lamps include table lamps and floor standing lamps. We also stock bulbs with high lumens.**

**We are also currently offering free demonstrations of the all new Amazon Echo / Dot speakers so pop in to the Vision Support Centre and see how we can assist you.**

## **STEPPING FORWARD**

**If you have recently experienced sight loss, this short course could be of assistance to you. For four sessions we will describe the variety of services and products available for visually impaired people. Please get in touch if you are interested in taking part.**

## **SUMMER TRIP**

**Due to the success of the summer trip last year to Rycroft Hall in Hambleton we are organising another trip this year on 25<sup>th</sup> July. Places are going fast so if anyone is interested please contact Emillie our Group Co-ordinator.**

## **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.**

## **SIGHT LOSS AWARENESS TRAINING**

**We offer awareness training to companies or organisations that wish to provide an excellent service to all customers. If anyone is interested in this service, please contact us on 01229 440556 for more details.**

## **BEWELLFEST**

**10am – 3.00pm Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Barrow AFC,  
Holker Street Stadium, Wilkie Road.**

**A free community fun day out themed on health and wellbeing to include the big lunch – a community picnic, children’s activities and a wellbeing marketplace.**

**We hope to see you there.**

## **CHILDRENS PROJECT**

### **Manchester Museum of Science & Industry Trip – February 2018**

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the Younger Generations went on a trip to the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester. When we arrived we had a look around the general exhibitions. The children took pictures of themselves on the cameras in the foyer, which we could then see on the screens all around the building. The children also had a go at lifting a car using a pulley system. We then headed into the Robots exhibition.

On entry to the exhibition, the children were all given booklets to complete with activities in them. There were questions which the children needed to find the answers to within the exhibition and also drawing activities. The children enjoyed petting and brushing the robotic toy animals on display. There were lots of robots on display from as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> Century in one form or another. We got to see how robots have been developed over the years and how they are now being made to resemble us, interact with us and even think like us as humans.

We all went to the café and had lunch together, then afterwards we headed into the Imagination Station to have a look at the interactive exhibition there. The children had the opportunity to spin a wheel, which demonstrated the persistence of vision, make shadows using a light box, produce electricity by pedalling a push bike, learn how magnets work and make sounds and music on a set of



**pipes. There were so many exhibits to use and discover how they worked.**

**Finally we went outside to have a go on the Victorian Fairground. It was so very cold, but this didn't stop everyone from having fun. The children enjoyed the swings, the carousels, the helter-skelter, swing boats and hook a duck, before we headed home. It was such a good day out. We took lots of photos of our day out; please have a look at them on our Facebook page.**

**Cath Rogerson**

## **VOLUNTEERING**

**In addition to the volunteers who help run our social groups, we also need people who can help us by:**

**Driving**

**Being our Handyman**

**Talking to people**

**Walking with people**

**Administration**

**Helping with fundraising**

**Approaching local solicitors to help with legacy giving**

**Having fun with us!**

**If you are interested in any of the above opportunities please get in touch.**

## **WHAT'S ON IN 2018**

**Monday Group** – Social – Every Monday night 7.00 p.m. – 9.00 p.m. at Spring Mount, Walney.

**Tuesday Group** – Craft work – Every Tuesday 1.30 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

**Thursday Group** – Bingo – Every Thursday 2.15 p.m. – 4.15 p.m. at Station View, Barrow.

**Ulverston Group** – Social – meets every third Wednesday at 1.30p.m. – 3.00 p.m - Neville Street Methodist Church, Ulverston

**Macular & Charles Bonnet Group** – A support group for people with macular degeneration and for people who experience visual hallucination's as a result of their sight loss. The next group's meet's on 13<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> November 1.30.p.m. – 3.30.p.m at Neville Street Methodist Church, Ulverston

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

**Dual Sensory Loss Support Group** – Meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday 1.30.p.m – 3.00.p.m at the Vision Support Centre

**Millom Group** – Social – every Friday 1.00.p.m – 3.00.p.m at the Salvation Army Citadel.

**Grange Group** – Social – First Wednesday of every month 2.00.p.m – 4.00.p.m at Abbot Hall, Kent's Bank.

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

**Knit & Natter – Social – Every Tuesday at 10.00.a.m – 11.00.a.m. A chance to enjoy some knitting while having a chat. At the Vision Support Centre.**

**Blind Football – Fitness – Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every Month 7.00.p.m. – 8.00.p.m at Central Drive community Hall.**

**Techie Tuesday – Need help with IT? Book an appointment and come and see our Advisor who will be happy to help you. At the Vision Support Centre.**

**Taste of Life Club – A small group of visually impaired people getting together to taste a variety of drinks. Various days and locations around Barrow.**

**Volunteer Appreciation Day – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June at the Vision Support Centre an opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for supporting our work this year.**

**National Eye Health Week – 17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September.**

## **FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

**22<sup>nd</sup> June – Round the Abbey Walk with John Murphy**

**23<sup>rd</sup> June – Millom Street Collection**

**4<sup>th</sup> August – Ulverston Street Collection**

**18<sup>th</sup> August – Grange Street Collection**

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> September – Booths Store Collection**

**16<sup>th</sup> September – Cross Morecambe Bay Walk**



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## **EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION**

**We have a number of equipment providers who are willing to come to the Vision Support Centre to demonstrate the new equipment that visually impaired people can benefit from:**

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> June – Dolphin & Wireless for the Blind**

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September – Optelec**

## **BLIND FOOTBALL**

**We are currently running Blind Football sessions. Have fun while exercising. Come along to one of our sessions and join in. For more details contact the Vision Support Centre. Please note that the next session will be on 15<sup>th</sup> June but thereafter every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in the month.**

## **FUNDRAISING**

**Many thanks to our regular band of trusty street collectors who were out in the Cumbrian sunshine, rain and cold to help raise funds for us during recent months. In the coming months they will be out again and if you can spare a day please call me at the Vision Support Centre.**

**Our team successfully completed the Keswick to Barrow sponsored walk recently and raised much needed funds to help continue to support visually impaired people in our area.**



**Tracy Culley-Brown & Adrian Treharne not stopping at the pub on the K2B!**

**If you have any unwanted stamps, jewellery, mobile phones, laptops, sat navs, please let us know because**

they can be recycled and we get cash for them.

We currently have 22 Friends who regularly give support to our charity and raise £5k a year. This is a fantastic way to enable us to continue to provide our services. Some people think we are government funded and we are not. The Friends started about 4 years ago and has steadily built to 22 people. But some people are reluctant to be giving every month to the scheme or don't have bank accounts. We understand this and say that you can still be a Friend by once a year donating an amount via cheque/cash. One of our members has just decided to become a Friend by doing this and we are very grateful for her support.



To the future, on 22<sup>nd</sup> Jun we will be having our Abbey Walk. Starting at 6pm at the Amphitheatre car park, we will be guided by John Murphy for about one and a half hours and then arrive back at the Abbey Mill Coffee Shop and Tearoom. Dogs are welcome! Contact the Vision Support Centre for a £5 ticket.

Paul Ogden

# 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.**

# **BARROW & DISTRICTS SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND**

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**Charity Number: 1051674**