



**Winter 2019**  
**Magazine**

***Inside this issue of the Sight Advice Magazine***

<i>Chief Executive Update</i> .....	3
<i>Positive Steps</i> .....	4
<i>South Lakes Talking Newspaper</i> .....	5
<i>VIP Diaries</i> .....	5
<i>Service in the Spotlight: Assistive Technology</i> .....	6
<i>Hey Cane</i> .....	8
<i>Vital News</i> .....	8
<i>Annual General Meeting</i> .....	9
<i>Eye Clinic Liaison Officer</i> .....	9
<i>Children &amp; Young People’s Project</i> .....	10
<i>What’s On</i> .....	11
<i>Henshaws Knowledge Village</i> .....	14
<i>Product of the Month: talking Books/Newspapers</i> .....	15
<i>Pot Pourri of Poetry from a VIP</i> .....	16
<i>Volunteer News</i> .....	17
<i>User Forum</i> .....	18
<i>Christmas is coming</i> .....	18
<i>Fundraising this winter</i> .....	19
<i>Update from Timothy Bagot</i> .....	21
<i>The Blind Chocolatier</i> .....	22
<i>Contact Details</i> .....	23

***Sight Advice South Lakes***

We offer a wide range of services providing information, support and equipment for people with sight problems. At The Bradbury Centre, 116 Highgate, there is a display of aids and equipment including clocks, watches, kitchen equipment, toys, games, computers, electronic magnifiers and lots more.

We are open Monday to Thursday – 9.30am to 4.00pm. The first Monday of the month, the office will be closed until 11.30am for staff training. If you are making a special journey to come to the new premises, or to see a particular member of staff, we suggest that you contact the office in advance to make sure that someone will be available to assist you. If you are unable to visit us at The Bradbury Centre, we can visit you in your own home.

For more information on any of our services, telephone 01539 769055.

## ***Chief Executive Report***

Welcome to the Winter edition of our popular Magazine. As I write the team here at Sight Advice South Lakes are just recovering from a fantastic day spent with BBC Radio Cumbria and BBC North West Tonight as part of their Children in Need campaign.



We are lucky enough to receive Children in Need funding for our Children and Young People's project and were delighted when BBC North West chose our charity to launch their "Pudsey Push" starting from The Bradbury Centre. BBC Radio Cumbria also asked if they could broadcast their breakfast show live from our meeting room on the same day! As a small charity, we would never be able to buy that level of publicity and we feel the day put Sight Advice South Lakes well and truly on the map.

Writing of being on the map, I am delighted that specialised suppliers for assistive technology are approaching us to product test their new and developing products. If you are interested in giving some feedback on these pieces of equipment, you can find further information on page 8.

Look on page 9 to read about our forthcoming AGM, which will be held in January after the busy Christmas period. At our AGM we cover topics such as what Sight Advice South Lakes stands for and some of the successes we have had over the last twelve months. To find out more about what we have achieved in working with people here in South Lakeland, please come along to the charity's annual general meeting on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020, which will be held at The Bradbury Centre, Sight Advice South Lakes, 116 Highgate, Kendal at 10.30am. We will be serving refreshments after the AGM which is likely to last 45 minutes. It would be wonderful to see you there.

In this edition you will find some raffle tickets for our annual Christmas Draw. We would be very grateful if you could sell these on our behalf. We receive no funding or sponsorship for our valued magazine and this annual fundraiser helps support the magazines costs. Thank you

Finally stay warm and well this winter and best wishes for a happy, healthy 2020.

Our popular Positive Steps course is an excellent opportunity for people living with sight loss to find out more about the support, advice and guidance which is available.



We now offer the course around the South Lakes, making it even more accessible to our clients.

Recently, we have delivered the course in a number of sheltered and supported housing complexes, enabling people living with sight loss to meet other people with similar experiences.

Participants of the course regularly feedback on how beneficial the sessions are. Here is some of our most recent feedback:

“Meeting other people who have lost their sight was wonderful – I felt like I am sharing this change in my world with someone else”

“I was floundering, this course told me what was available to me, far more than I thought”

Each of these sessions is FREE, lasts just over an hour and covers a different aspect of sight loss, for example:

- Week 1 What is sight loss? Eye conditions and how they affect people in different ways.
- Week 2 How aids and technology can help my sight loss.

The course is a great opportunity to try a variety of daily living aids, equipment and new technology such as kitchen aids, magnifiers, Alexa and iPad/phone. During the course, attendees also hear from other people living with sight loss and share strategies and experiences. We will also offer advice relating to other areas of support and benefits information.

If you know of someone or a group who may be interested in having a Positive Steps course, please contact Tim Ward on 01539 76905.

The three next course at Sight Advice Kendal will be Wednesday March 11<sup>th</sup> , 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, all three dates are 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm and are also free!

## ***South Lakes Talking Newspaper Update***



For over 45 years, the South Lakes Talking Newspaper Association has provided a free weekly audio service for visually impaired people, who have difficulty reading the local newspaper, the Westmorland Gazette. SLTNA is a small independent local charity, registered with the Charity Commission and works closely with Sight Advice to try to ensure that the service meets the needs of as many people as possible in the South Lakes area and beyond.

We have always tried to make use of the latest technology available and we were one of the first talking newspaper societies in the country to record digitally on memory sticks, which we send out, using the Post Office's 'Freepost: Articles for the Blind'. If you would like further information about the service, you can contact Bill Barrington or Bruce Carnaffin, our Listener Liaison Officers, on 01539 733426 or 0796 0438561 respectively.

Additionally, our recordings are available on our internet site, [sltna.org.co.uk](http://sltna.org.co.uk), which can be accessed on any computer, laptop, tablet or mobile phone with internet access.

Now, we have been able to extend this provision by adding our recordings, called 'The Westmorland Gazette' on the recently launched 'British Wireless Blind Fund' app. The app is available to download for free. This will also enable you to hear the recordings of over 200 other Talking Newspapers around the British Isles, who use the BWBF system.

You never again need be short of something to listen to!

Ian Hoyle, Registrar,  
South Lakes Talking Newspaper Association

## ***VIP Diaries***



The full range of products, 2020 diaries and calendars, address/telephone books, writing pads, note-books and large print stationery are now available. Items can be purchased from The Bradbury Centre or ordered direct from VIP Diaries on 01539 726613 or [www.vipdiaries.co.uk](http://www.vipdiaries.co.uk).

At Sight Advice South Lakes we run a very comprehensive Assistive Technology service for people living with sight loss. We use the term “Assistive technology” when we are talking about aids and devices that use some form of advanced technology.



Popular assistive technology at Sight Advice would include, Smart phones, iPads and adjustments to Windows 10 settings for sight loss, Talking Books/ newspapers, desktop video magnifiers, robots such as Alexa/ Google home, talking phones, smart glasses, smart kettles, navigation devices, talking scales and much more are also part of the assistive technology menu.

Tim Ward is our Assistive technology Co-ordinator, and he is on hand to advise, visit and set up appropriate assistive technology for people. Sadly, he is unable to repair computers and email systems. You will need a computer technician for that type of support.

In recent years, advances in technology mean that new technology is much simpler for people of all ages to both learn and use. A lot of newly designed innovations mean for example that many things such as a telephone, TV and computer can be used just by voice alone. So telling the time, making phone calls, listening to the news are all now easily accessible. We can also adjust laptop settings and make the text and mouse much larger and show you how to access a free magnifier on your smart phone.

When you first meet Tim for Assistive Technology support, he will spend time understanding your goals and aspirations which may involve re-connecting socially to your friends and family or being able to read your newspaper. We then discuss possible technology solutions such as a smart phone with lessons on how to use the voice activation to make a call just by voice or maybe teaching someone how to set up a Facebook account on their computer.

As well as technology a wide range of informative and educational assistive technology services are available at Sight Advice South Lakes. These range from individual consultations, group activities

and exhibitions for people to see the world's latest innovations and development in assistive technology for visually impaired people.

Our technology courses include "Introduction to Social Media". This type of course is for the very beginner and shows people how to set up a social media account and send people messages.

Because we offer a range of assistive technology services which vary from informal drop in exhibitions, to highly personalized one to one individual sessions, there will be a format that suits everyone. We offer a range of opportunities to sample technology. People regularly say "technology is not for me" but after attending an exhibition or having a personal assessment they often decide that technology may have something to offer after all.

For many people, who have been introduced to assistive technology, their sight loss has been transformed by devices that they had no idea existed. So, if your sight is giving you a problem in a certain area, it could be reading, cooking or communicating with friends, contact Sight Advice. It is possible that Assistive Technology could help.

What's on over Winter? We have some excellent visitors coming to see us:

Humanware <https://store.humanware.com/> are returning on December 5<sup>th</sup> 10.00am till 2.00pm at Sight Advice. Their new vision expert, Sarah, will be showing the latest in video Magnification, including the "Reveal". This is an extremely powerful desk top sized magnifier that will also read out text. The added bonus is that "Reveal" folds away so it is easy to store and carry. Sarah will have magnification devices of all sizes and prices, plus she will have ORCAM smart glasses with her, so please feel free to drop in.

Oxsight <https://www.oxsight.co.uk/> will be supporting on this day Jennifer their trained Optician is bringing the world leading product for people with tunnel vision aimed at people with RP.

Ali Ismail from Revolution Eyes <https://revolutioneyesltd.co.uk/> is visiting Sight Advice for the first time on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 from 10.30am to 2.00pm. Ali has developed Hey Cane! which is a smart device to attach to any cane to ensure you never lose your cane again. Everyone is welcome, find out more on page 18.

## **Sight Advice Magazine – Winter 2019**

Oxsight are returning on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 from 10.00am until 2.00pm at Sight Advice. They are a world leader in using video technology in spectacles, and Jennifer a qualified Optician, will be testing their latest product not yet on the market! This is aimed very much at people with Macular Degeneration as it enhances peripheral vision, this product compliments the original Oxsight glasses aid tunnel vision, this will also be on display.

### ***Hey Cane***

***Ali Ismail***

My name is Ali Ismail, and I am a blind entrepreneur. Since I became blind, I have always been determined to stay independent. This is when I realised something!

Our canes are the keys to unlock the gateway to the world. They allow us to become independent. We cannot imagine what could happen to us if we lose this stick! For me, losing my cane is like going blind all over again. So, I decided to commit myself to resolve this problem, and I created HeyCane. HeyCane is a smart device that attaches to any cane. Once it is activated, you will never lose it again.

HeyCane – Never Be Lost again! So come join Tim and I on January 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Bradbury Centre, Kendal, 10.30am to 1.00pm and help me test “Hey Cane” and maybe you would like to purchase one!

### ***Vital News***

VITAL is a volunteer led group offering social events to people living with sight loss. The group welcomes new members and if you would be interested in joining any of the activities, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01539 769055.

This year’s Christmas dinner is fast approaching and takes place on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December at the Crooklands Hotel at 7.30pm.

The Vital AGM is on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm at the Bradbury Centre and all new, prospective members are welcome to join the group at the AGM.

The next VITAL fundraiser is a quiz on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> February at Netherfield Cricket Club at 7.30pm. The entry fee is £1 a person, so bring a team and have a fun night out. There is an optional buffet supper at a cost of £3.50. Please email Chris Jackson by 5<sup>th</sup> February if you would like the buffet: [chrisg.jackson13@gmail.com](mailto:chrisg.jackson13@gmail.com)



## ***Annual General Meeting***

The trustees and staff of Sight Advice South Lakes warmly invite you to attend their Annual General Meeting on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 at 10.30am at Sight Advice South Lakes, The Bradbury Centre, 116 Highgate, Kendal, LA9 4HE. Please note that parking can be found at the Brewery Arts Centre and at Dowkers Lane car park.

The AGM is open to all so please come along to hear about the charity's achievements during the past twelve months, elect trustees and finish with a catch up over coffee and cake. We expect the AGM to last no more than 45 minutes

We hope you will be able to join us. Please make contact with the office if you are available to attend so that we can ensure we have enough refreshments available.

## ***Eye Clinic Liaison Officer***

***Jackie Bateman***

Hello from Westmorland General Hospital! Our Eye Clinic Liaison Service continues to go from strength to strength. We, happily, have obtained some additional funding from the RNIB and are very pleased to welcome Sarah Stoddard into the ECLO role to cover an extra day in the Macular Clinic. Sarah and I will be present in the Macular Clinic Monday to Wednesday 830am – 430pm.



Don't forget that if you require support or advice linked to your sight loss, we are happy to provide it – either in the Macular clinic or the Eye Outpatients Clinic. Just ask the staff in the eye outpatients to contact us. If you visit on a day when we are not present, then please ask the staff to take your details and we will get back to you as soon as we are able. Areas we can offer support with include referring for giant print or talking books; advising about services available which could help you; supporting you through the Certificate of Visual Impairment registration process or being a listening ear.

Do come to see us when you visit the hospital for you appointment.

Our children and young people have had a really exciting and fun few months! Late in September, we had a great morning doing Archery and some of our members also enjoyed a session at The Aura Sensory Experience in Kendal.



Lights, Camera Action....it was wonderful to be part of Children in Need week (11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> November). We hosted BBC Radio Cumbria, North West Tonight and Pudsey Bear.



Pudsey Bear started his journey being pulled on the 'famous red sofa' from The Bradbury Centre and finished the day live on North West Tonight from the Glebe at Bowness-on-Windermere. What a special occasion, being able to showcase our brilliant project! Thank you to all who came down to support this event.

Some of our members continue to enjoy skiing lessons with Kendal Snowsport Club this season. It's great that we have a few new children interested in trying this sport. Once again, thank you to all the volunteer instructors supporting our children.

It's that time of the year again where all our families get together and enjoy a trip to the Theatre. On Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> December, we are off to the Duke's Theatre in Lancaster to watch Cinderella. The performance is audio described for those who wish to use it and there will also be the wonderful touch tour.

Other activities planned include Cycling at the Velodrome on 1<sup>st</sup> February and Tubing at Kendal Snowsport Club on 22<sup>nd</sup> February

Please contact Alicia if you would like more information about these activities or would like to become a member. Please do get in touch with Alicia to find out more on 01539 769055 or [alicia@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:alicia@sightadvice.org.uk)

**What's On For you to pull put and keep**

**N.B. Events listed take place at The Bradbury Centre, 116 Highgate, Kendal, LA9 4HE, unless stated otherwise.**

**December 2019**

<b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Cyber Monday</b> Come and take advantage of the special cyber deals with support from our team	<b>2pm – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>VITAL Christmas Dinner</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>
<b>Tues 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group</b>	<b>2pm – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Maude Street Surgery</b>	<b>10am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Arnside Surgery</b>	<b>9.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tech Know How.</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Humanware magnification, ORCAM, and Oxsight “smart glasses”. Demonstration of latest technology</b>	<b>10.30am – 2.00pm</b>
<b>Thurs 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Card Writing</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Fri 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Morrisons Store Collection</b> Volunteers/collectors welcome	<b>All Day</b>
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kendal Peer Support Group</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Quiz Night at The Duke of Cumberland</b>	<b>Starts at 7.30pm</b>
<b>Tues 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Peer Support Group Methodist Church, Kirkby Lonsdale</b>	<b>10am – 11.45am</b>
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Peer Support Group Christmas Lunch at Burn Howe Hotel</b>	<b>1.00pm</b>
<b>Thurs 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Volunteer Christmas Celebration at the Unitarian Church Hall, Kendal</b>	<b>2 -4.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Concert with Chris Bannister at Natland Church</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kendal Street Collection</b> Volunteers/collectors welcome	<b>All Day</b>

<b>Sight Advice Magazine – Winter 2019</b>		
<b>Mon 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group</b>	<b>10.30-12noon</b>
	<b>Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	
<b>Mon 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Bingo at The Globe, Market Place, Kendal</b>	<b>Starts at 7.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Helme Chase Surgery, Kendal</b>	<b>9.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Mon 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice South Lakes closes at 4.00pm and re-opens on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 9.30am</b>	

## **January 2020**

<b>Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice South Lakes reopens at 9.30am</b>	
<b>Wed 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Peer Support Group</b>	<b>10.00-11.45am</b>
	<b>Goodly Dale, Windermere</b>	
<b>Wed 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Tech Know How Group</b>	<b>2pm – 3.30pm</b>
	<b>Langstone House, Broad St, Windermere</b>	
<b>Thurs 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Tech Know How “special” meet Ali Ismail inventor par excellence! And help test his revolutionary long cane “Hey Cane” smart device.</b>	<b>10.30am - 1.00pm</b>
<b>Thurs 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Dominoes</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A night of tales..... Fundraising event at Sight Advice Centre</b>	<b>7.00pm start</b>
<b>Tues 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Peer Support Group</b>	<b>10am – 11.45am</b>
	<b>Methodist Church, Kirkby Lonsdale</b>	
<b>Wed 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Helme Chase Surgery, Kendal</b>	<b>9.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Wed 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Introduction to Social Media</b>	<b>10am – 11.30am</b>
<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group</b>	<b>10.30-12noon</b>
	<b>Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	
<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>VITAL AGM</b>	<b>7.00pm start</b>

<b>Tues 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Sedbergh Peer Support Group, People’s Hall, Sedbergh</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Play Your Cards Right</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>February 2020</b>		
<b>Tues 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Wed 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Maude Street Surgery, Kendal</b>	<b>10am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop in at Arnside Surgery</b>	<b>9.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tech Know How: Ox sight NEW Macular “central vision” glasses, plus existing peripheral RP glasses.</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Dominoes</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Choir Evening at Kendal Unitarian Church</b>	<b>Start at 7.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kendal Peer Support Group</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>VITAL Fundraising Quiz Netherfield Cricket Club</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Support Group Goodly Dale, Windermere</b>	<b>10.00-11.45am</b>
<b>Wed 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Introduction to Social Media</b>	<b>10am – 11.30am</b>
<b>Mon 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	<b>10.30-12noon</b>
<b>Tues 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sedbergh Peer Support Group, People’s Hall, Sedbergh</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Wed 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advice Drop-in at Helme Chase Surgery, Kendal</b>	<b>9am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thurs 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Quiz</b>	<b>2pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Ambleside Support Group Rowan Court, Rothay Road, Ambleside</b>	<b>2.30pm – 4.00pm</b>

We have recently spent some time exploring and learning about the ongoing development of the Knowledge Village created by Henshaws.

Henshaws is a charity based in the North of England offering a range of support for people living with visual impairment.



Henshaws Knowledge Village is an online place to share knowledge and expertise with those experiencing or working with sight loss disability. Henshaws have divided the Knowledge Village into eight different sections to help guide users to the content you want, namely: Accessibility, Apps, Benefits & Support, Entertainment & Art, Children and Young people, Daily Living, Life Hacks and Product & Technology. Each section contains a range of blogs, videos and eBooks providing useful information, advice and “hacks”.

We could list the videos but there is so much information and tips shared on the website it would fill the Magazine. To give you a flavour of what is available we have accessed information such as:

“How to distinguish between bottles in the home”

“Top tricks for finding dropped items”

“Accessible Board Games”

“Cooking with Sight Loss”

The Knowledge Village is updated with new content on a weekly basis so we would strongly recommend you make it a favourite website on your browsers. The Knowledge Village is accessed through the following website:

<https://www.henshaws.org.uk/knowledge-village/>

***Product of the Month: Talking Books/Newspapers***

When we visit people with sight loss in their own homes, some of the most popular services people ask about are talking books and newspapers. The experience of listening to a novel or newspaper is a little different to reading one. However, they offer an excellent alternative for people whose sight loss means they find reading difficult even with the use of suitable lighting and magnifiers.



Services vary in the way they make books and newspapers available. Most people find memory sticks the most convenient way of receiving talking books and newspapers, while CDs, downloads and streaming onto computers, smartphones or tablets may also be available. There is a range of talking book and newspaper services available. I have outlined a few options here.

Talking book libraries have a wide range of books to choose from. Members can select individual books or ask the library to select books for them based on their preferences. Up to six books can be provided at a time. The two main libraries are:

RNIB - Tel 0303 123 9999 [www.rnib.org.uk/talking-books-service](http://www.rnib.org.uk/talking-books-service)

Calibre - Tel 01296 432339 [www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk)

Both services are free of charge, although Calibre requires a one-off joining fee of £35. RNIB will lend up to six books at a time and Calibre will lend up to five books. Both services can lend books on memory sticks, CDs and by streaming.

I have heard recently about the Torch Trust, a Christian organisation who can provide talking books and talking Bibles. Contact them on Tel 01858 438260.

Cumbria County Council Library service holds a range of talking books on CD and also offer audio books to download. You can enquire via your local library or online at [www.cumbria.gov.uk](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk).

Audible is an Amazon service through which subscribers can buy and download audio books to play on a tablet or smartphone. There is a basic subscription of £7.99p per month which entitles subscribers to download one new book a month which they can then keep.

## **Sight Advice Magazine – Winter 2019**

**South Lakes Talking Newspaper is a local charity and runs an excellent local service providing a talking version of the Westmorland Gazette on a weekly basis. These are provided on a memory stick and customers need to source a suitable player although the charity may be able to loan customers a player, in some circumstances.**

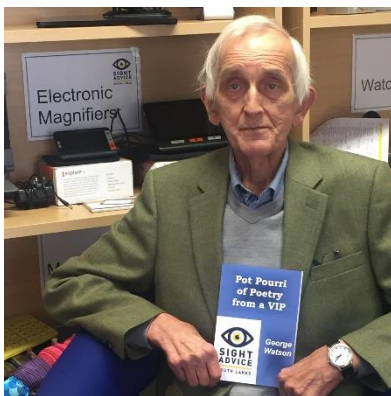
### **Listening to talking books and newspapers**

**The equipment needed to listen to talking books and newspapers will depend on the format chosen. Memory sticks can be played on a memory stick player such as the Sonic 2 Player. This is a small rechargeable player which can be moved around the house with you including outdoors if needed. It has a headphone socket to listen to books privately if required. The Sonic 2 Player costs around £60 or £50 for those who do not pay VAT. They are available from RNIB, Calibre and online sources such as Amazon.**

**Players for CDs will depend on the format of CD used by the service. Some use a CD format called Daisy which requires a Daisy compatible CD player. Other CDs will play on audio CD players.**

**Downloading and streaming talking books and newspapers will work on your existing computer, smartphone or tablet.**

## ***Pot Pourri of Poetry from a VIP***



**Looking for a unique Christmas present? Looking to raise your spirits during the dark winter months? Look no further, the talented and inspirational George has published a selection of his poems in aid of Sight Advice South Lakes.**

**You can purchase your copy from the office at Sight Advice South Lakes for £4.75 plus postage and packing. Also, with the help of the South Lakes Talking Newspaper and some wonderful members of the Act Your Age drama group, the poetry has been recorded so you can also purchase a recorded version. A wonderful example of what communities can achieve when they come together.**

**Thank you to everyone involved and to George for realising his vision.**



Did you know that according to a report published by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) in January this year, that one of the things likely to make people think twice about volunteering is the worry about an ongoing commitment?

Volunteers with Sight Advice can choose exactly what time and when they want to volunteer. Every second of a volunteer's time is as precious to us as it is to them and we try to make sure that this resource is spent wisely. That same report also says that among the key reasons for people continuing to volunteer is the organization itself and the cause it stands for. Our longest serving volunteer has been with us for 31 years, hopefully that says a lot about what Sight Advice stands for. So if you want to suggest an organisation which people may want to give their precious spare time to, please let them know about Sight Advice South Lakes, you can feel confident that their support will be fully appreciated.

Some of the opportunities for volunteers include:

**Fund Raising Volunteers** – join this team and you can be part of a street collection, organise, market and host events. Very varied and very flexible and a really fun motivated team.

**Community Vision Supporters** – helping clients to get out and about in their local communities, taking part in clubs and social activities. Volunteers are matched with clients within their areas, to suit their availability and interests. Several brave clients have been helped to identify some aims which they feel will help them to overcome some of the loneliness and isolation they are experiencing. Please get in touch if you feel you can offer support, this may be as a one off or helping clients to attend a regular monthly group or as and when required. If you feel you would like to know more about Community Vision and how you can help, do get in touch with me. You will find it so rewarding and perhaps be surprised at how a little can mean so much to people. Here are some examples of Community Vision opportunities available now.

**Area of interest**

**Location**

Help with a craft project and to attend a local craft group in Beetham Mill.

Milnthorpe

## **Sight Advice Magazine – Winter 2019**

To have some short walks around her home area, attend Yoga and Tai Chi classes (evenings starting January) **Burton**

Company on her shopping trips **Storth**

Conversation **Milnthorpe**

To attend an ART group **Kendal**

We hold a Volunteer Christmas Celebration and I would like to let the volunteers know what a difference they make in people's lives. So if you want to share an experience or thought you have about the volunteers you have met or even just to say thank-you, please get in touch with me at Sight Advice. It would be lovely to pass on personal thanks as part of the celebration.

Have a lovely Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

### ***User Forum***

We are always very happy to receive feedback at any time. We also hold regular User Forums through the year. This is an opportunity for you to meet with a trustee and member of the Sight Advice management team.

The next user forum is taking place on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2.00pm at The Bradbury Centre, Kendal. The User Forums take place at the same time as the group meeting, however, you do not have to be a member of that group to attend the User Forum. Please do come along and let us know what you think about the support the charity is offering and if there are other types of support which would be helpful for you. All feedback we receive is valuable and assists us in planning for the future of Sight Advice.

### ***Christmas is coming***

***Jackie Bateman***

**Do you struggle to write your own Christmas Cards?**

If so then come along to the Sight Advice South Lakes office on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup> between 1.30 and 4.00pm and our merry band of staff and volunteers will help you write your cards and envelopes. Don't forget to bring along your address book and stamps too. Bring your own cards, address book and money for postage. Some Christmas cards will be available to buy on the day too. It would help us if you could let us know if you are coming along but if you can't, just turn up on the day.

What an amazing Autumn with our Ceilidh, Inter - pub Quiz night and our street and store collections, jars and Pink Elephants. These have continued to bring in much needed income for the charity. Thank you to all of our fantastic volunteers and supporters. We would love to welcome you to some of our upcoming fundraising events.



### Store Collections

We will be at Morrisons on 6<sup>th</sup> December and out on the streets of Kendal on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup>. On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> we will be providing hot drinks and mince pies to warm our fabulous helpers at The Bradbury Centre. Please let us know if you would like to help with either collection.

### Bingo and Quiz

December sees our Quiz Night on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> and Bingo Christmas Cracker Night on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> - both events are always fun and you might just have a win!



### Seasonal Concert

On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December we are co-hosting a fundraising evening concert by Chris Bannister with our friends at Natland Church. We will be treated to an evening of the music of John Denver and others. This promises to be a lovely, seasonal evening and tickets are available from Sight Advice. Lakeland Kitchens are sponsoring the event and donating raffle prizes, which is great news. We very much appreciate their support.

### Grand Christmas Draw

Tickets are available from Sight Advice with Cash Prizes of £100, £50 and £25 cash prizes are kindly sponsored by MTP Media. Could you help us sell some tickets to your friends, family, social groups or church groups? Please contact Aileen for some extra tickets.

### New Year, New Healthier You

Are you looking to shed a few pounds or to run a few miles? Perhaps you are a smoker who is determined to stop?

## **Sight Advice Magazine – Winter 2019**

**Is this the year you are determined to feel fitter and healthier? If you are, would you consider helping us to benefit, as your local charity, while you do this? We can help you with sponsorship forms and finding a wider range of sponsors among our supporters. See Aileen our Fundraising Coordinator for details.**

### **Winter's Tales at Sight Advice**

**After Christmas, the long winter nights can make us feel a little flat. Why not join us for a seasonal Winter's Tales evening on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> January at Sight Advice. Our guest reader will be Julie who brings a love of creative writing and storytelling. There will also be an opportunity for guests to read a favourite short story or poem themselves too or simply sit in comfort and enjoy listening. Refreshments will be provided and tickets are £5 per head, from Sight Advice. Numbers will be limited, so do get your tickets early to avoid disappointment.**

### **Concert Evening**

**On Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, we are treated to the popular Windermere and Bowness Community Choir performing an evening of much loved, light music pieces at the Unitarian Hall in Kendal. Refreshments will be available and tickets are £10.00 per person. The choir are kindly donating their performance and all monies raised will support the ongoing work of Sight Advice South Lakes.**

### **Swimathon 2020**

**Thinking ahead to March, on Sat 14<sup>th</sup> March it is the Swimathon organised by the Kendal South Westmorland Rotary. This is an important fundraising opportunity for local charities. Would you or someone you know be interested in taking part on behalf of Sight Advice? If so, please let Aileen or Amy know.**



**All that is left to say is a huge THANK YOU to everyone who has supported us in 2019 through attending events, volunteering, sponsoring, baking and many more. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and that 2020, when it arrives, brings health wealth and happy times for you.**

***Update from Timothy Bagot***

**A common query is where you should present with concerns about your eyes or vision. There are a number of options available ranging from the opticians to A&E depending on the symptoms.**



**The local Minor Eye Conditions Service is a sensible place to present if you have sore eyes, red eyes, sticky eyes, watery eyes, flashes and floaters in your vision or a sudden loss or reduction in vision. This is a service available at most high street opticians in the Morecambe Bay area. The service is available to people aged 2 years and older who are registered with a Morecambe Bay GP surgery. The service aims to promptly assess and manage patients in the community taking pressure off GP surgeries and the hospital eye service. Patients can be referred by their GP surgery, pharmacy etc or can contact a high street opticians directly. Gradual change in vision should usually be assessed by a normal sight test, either NHS funded or privately depending on your eligibility. Pharmacies are also well set up to deliver care for a number of minor eye conditions through their Minor Ailments Service.**

**Data from the optician's Minor Eye Conditions Service shows that over 80% of patients who present are managed entirely by the optical practice or by the optical practice and the patient's GP. Around 15-17% are referred on to the hospital eye service with more complex eye problems.**

**Some cases of visual problems such as total loss of vision or loss of vision with certain other symptoms need to be addressed differently. Sudden loss of vision can be a symptom of stroke. Where there is a suggestion of stroke then you should call an ambulance by dialling 999.**

**A good way to find out where to present if you are unsure is to use the NHS111 service. The set of questions asked can guide you to where is best to be seen to assess your condition.**

I grew up in Ings and Staveley, going to school and college locally. During college, I undertook a placement at the Merewood Hotel, taking up a full-time position there in 2007 and started training to be a pastry chef.



In July 2015, my eyesight deteriorated rapidly over a three week period. After twelve months and four hospitals, I was diagnosed with a rare eye condition called Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy. I am now registered legally blind. If you wish to read more about my rare condition visit <https://www.lhon.org>

My employers were very understanding and supportive. After my diagnosis and the company risk assessments were done, it was agreed I would come back to work as a prep chef rather than a pastry chef. I was pleased to be back working at the hotel and I retrained myself and adapted to overcome the challenges involved in doing the finer things. I got my pastry section back and improved my skills as a result of wanting to prove to myself and others I could still do my craft.

During the time I was away from work, Kitchen Impossible with Michel Roux Jr was on Channel 4. My Mum emailed the program and Michel Roux Jr phoned my Mum personally to give advice but she was so shocked she didn't give him my number.

My employer gave me a budget to do a cake sale and also a donation from their charity fund. As a result, I was able to go on the blind driving day. It was great fun as I loved my cars and, for me, not being able to drive anymore is the worst bit about being registered blind. I still go to car events with my friends like Goodwood but unfortunately they won't let me drive, which seems a bit unfair and I can't see the problem!



I am now following my dreams and ambitions and starting a new business hand making chocolates in Staveley, at Mill Yard in the heart of the Lake District. My friends and family call me "The Blind Chocolatier" hence the business name. "Hann-made by the Blind Chocolatier in the Lake District".

Facebook: The blind chocolatier or Instagram : theblindchocolatier

***Staff and Trustee Team***

**Sight Advice South Lakes Team**

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**Claire Park**

***Service Manager***

**Amy Pearman**

***Sight Support Coordinator***

***(Assistive Technology)***

**Tim Ward**

***Sight Support Coordinator***

***(Community Development)***

**Peter Knock**

***Sight Support Coordinator***

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