



**Spring 2020**  
**Magazine**

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***Sight Advice South Lakes***

We offer a wide range of services providing information, support and equipment for people with sight problems. In our premises 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 now open Monday to Thursday – 9.30am to 4pm. 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 Centre, we can visit you in your own home. For more information on any of our services, telephone 01539 769055. Please leave a message on the answering machine when the office is closed.

## ***Chief Executive Report***

Welcome to the Spring edition of our popular magazine. A great deal of work goes on each quarter to produce this magazine. The staff team at Sight Advice South Lakes and a group of volunteers work together to produce it. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Janice who has volunteered as part of the magazine team for a number of years collating all the articles together and placing the pages ready to be sent to print. I would also like to thank Jenny, another volunteer, who kindly proofreads the magazine for us and has the hard task of trying to make all our different writing styles seem consistent. I would also like to thank the volunteers who help pack and distribute the magazine. The magazine is not professionally produced; we do it all in house and we are thankful for the support of our volunteers. We receive no funding to support the costs of our magazine so, if you feel you can contribute to the production costs, donations would be greatly appreciated.



In January, we heard that we had been successful with a small grant from the National Lottery as part of their 25 years celebrations. The grant is to be spent on organising a day trip so people living with sight loss can access and enjoy an area of the Lake District, which they feel they no longer have the confidence to visit on their own. There are limited spaces available and the grant is for people who currently attend our information and support groups, however if we discover there is real need for this type of activity, we may look to provide more opportunities in the future.

Continuing the good news, we have received a grant to purchase two pieces of specialist equipment for people living with sight loss: a synaptic TV box and an Orcam My Eye. The equipment is available for demo, so please contact Tim Ward, Assistive Technology Coordinator, if you would like a demo.

I hope the next few months bring us all some sunshine as I think we are all ready to feel that warmth on our skin.

As you might have read in the last issue of the Magazine, the additional funding we have recently received from the RNIB has enabled us to now offer ECLO (Eye Clinic Liaison Officer) provision over three days a week (Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays) as opposed to the two days we covered before. This increase not only reflects just how busy the clinic can get but also highlights the importance of the role.

The main purpose of the ECLO role is to provide information, advice and emotional support to patients (their families and carers) in hospital eye clinics, as well as referring people on to appropriate community-based services.

This could be something as simple as providing information on a specific eye condition; to advising on the certification and registration process – outlining the benefits and concessions available to you if you are registered sight impaired (SI) or severely sight impaired (SSI).

If this sounds like the type of help and support that you would like, then please just ask. It is what we are here for!

Another part of the ECLO role is to help organise and support events. A recent example being the 'Living with Macular Degeneration' event, organised in conjunction with the Macular Society, which took place at Kendal Town Hall at the end of last year.

This included talks from Geraldine Hoad, the Macular Society's Research Manager, Michelle Dutton, their Regional Manager and Jackie Bateman (Sight Support Co-ordinator and ECLO).

Should you wish to find out about such events in the future, again, please just let us know – email [jackie@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:jackie@sightadvice.org.uk) or [sarah@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:sarah@sightadvice.org.uk) or call 01539 – 769055.

Thank you.



**Sarah Stoddard**



**Jackie Bateman**

## ***Service in the Spotlight – Sight Support Advisers***

We have two members of the team at Sight Advice who job share the role of Sight Support Advisers, Sarah and Krystyna. You will meet them if you visit our office as they work in the reception area. They are also the voices you will hear when you telephone the office.

They provide a friendly and warm welcome to everyone visiting and can help you in a variety of ways including:

- showing you how the range of aids and equipment on display in reception can assist you to live independently
- ordering any items which you may wish to purchase
- providing a listening ear if you are finding it difficult to cope with your sight loss
- referring you to one of our monthly Support groups
- booking you onto our events and courses
- providing information about the support available for the visually impaired from other organisations
- helping you complete your Blue badge application
- adding you to the list of people who receive a copy of our quarterly magazine.

This isn't an exhaustive list, and if you want any help or advice, please just ask and if they are unable to help you themselves, they will refer you to someone who can.



**Sarah Stoddard**



**Krystyna Slosarska**

Sarah and Krystyna are also able to make appointments for the rest of the team, so please do not hesitate to contact if you require any support – email:

[info@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:info@sightadvice.org.uk)  
or call 01539 769055



I've been working for Sight Advice for almost two years now and I'm very much enjoying the work. In particular, I like meeting people with sight problems in their homes to see how we can help. I've also learnt a lot from people who've told me about the items they've found helpful in maintaining their independence. I thought in this article I would share with you some of the things people have found useful – you might find them useful too!



### White walking sticks

People who use a walking stick find a white coloured stick is useful to tell others that they have a sight impairment. These may be available from NHS physiotherapists and can be bought from some shops and online suppliers.



However, a gentleman I met told me how he'd taken his existing walking stick - which he was comfortable with - and simply wound white sticky insulation tape around it to make it white. The reel of tape cost him around £1 from a hardware shop and has lasted him well. (Note these sticks are different from the mobility canes provided through the local council.)

### Making hot drinks

People with sight loss may find pouring hot water into a cup or mug difficult. The water level in a white mug is difficult to see. One lady told me she puts her finger over the lip of the mug until she feels the water level – at risk of scalding her finger! Another lady told me she uses the same mug each time and knows by its weight when the water level is close to the top.



Some people use simple liquid level indicators. These hook over the lip of the mug and make an audible alert when the water gets close to the top. They are widely available for around £7. A more expensive solution people have used is a hot water dispenser. This can be filled with water and then dispenses a set amount of water when the button is



pressed. They start at around £40 and more. Expensive models, costing over £50, allow you to set the amount of water dispensed to suit your cups or mugs.

### Reminders and telephone numbers

I see lots of homemade signs and lists, which have been made using simple A4 sized paper and thick felt tipped pens, to help people remember appointments and important telephone numbers. They seem to work well!

### Seeing controls on household items

People with sight loss can find it difficult to see to use things like central heating thermostats, microwave ovens, washing machines and TV remote controls. Some people use a small torch to help them to see. I always carry bumpons with me when I visit people.

These are raised self-adhesive plastic markers which can be stuck to controls on equipment. They are available in different colours which can be chosen to contrast the colour of the equipment being marked. As they are raised, they are tactile for people who may use equipment controls by feel rather than sight. I've seen homemade bumpons made out of coloured tape or brightly coloured sticky plasters. I've also seen equipment controls labelled with arrows and numbers using thick permanent markers. People can be very ingenious!



If you have any queries about any of the above, please get in touch. I'd also be very interested to hear if you've found any really good solutions to help you be independent at home.

***Tim's Tech Talk***

***Tim Ward***

### **Future Vision Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

Sight Advice South Lakes will again be holding their annual technology Future Vision Exhibition, on Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 10.00 am till 3.00 pm in Kendal Town Hall.

You can look forward to seeing a large range of the latest state of the art technology, which can assist people with sight loss and their carers. There will be examples of magnification, lighting,



**artificial intelligence, wearable technology, voice enablement, talking books, screen readers, phones, tablets, aids to daily living products and much, much more!**

**Oxsight, Hey Cane, Enhanced Vision, Humanware, Associated Optical, Pamtrad, Synaptic, Macular Society are already confirmed as attending and others are still to be finalised.**

**We will also be holding the Future Vision 2020 Exhibition in conjunction with a fundraising coffee morning in an adjacent room to the exhibition, so this will be a great day out.**

### **Exciting New service at Sight Advice: “Try before you Buy”**

**Sight Advice South Lakes has a wide range of daily living aids and technology, which we can demonstrate at the Bradbury Centre.**

**We are, therefore, opening our doors once a month where all the equipment will be laid out like a shop, and people can try things out at their leisure.**

**This will include all types of lighting, LED bulbs, magnification aids, writing aids, kitchen aids such as talking scales, liquid level indicators and one cup kettles, electronic magnifiers, iPads, iPhones, adapted windows laptop, Alexa, Google Home, Orcam talking spectacles, Synaptic talking tablets and more.**



**The idea is that you can peruse all the equipment at your leisure with Sarah and Tim on hand to show you how it works. You can order anything that is suitable and you can also ask for home demonstrations.**

**Come and join us on the following Monday afternoons, anytime between 1.30 to 3.30. It is a drop in, so please do come along:**

**Monday March 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday April 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday May 18<sup>th</sup>**



## ***App of the Season - Talking Newspaper***

The app TALKING NEWSPAPER has been developed by British Wireless for the Blind.

It is a free app and it is downloadable on both Apple and Android.

What it does is very simple; all the Talking Newspapers have been placed onto one app, including our own excellent local newspaper The Westmorland Gazette.

When you download this app, there is a regional menu. Go to North West, and “The Westmorland Gazette” is towards the bottom of the alphabetical list. It plays just the same as the current Talking Newspaper that can be found online or via USB drive. The newspaper is updated every week.

As a bonus you can hear news from all the other hundreds of talking newspapers in the United Kingdom. So, if you are interested in local news elsewhere, such as the Blackpool Gazette, The Shetland Times or the Kingston on Thames Talking News, this is the app for you!

## ***User Forums***

Sight Advice South Lakes is a user - led organisation and our future developments to service delivery are continually made in response to the feedback we receive from our clients. Recently, this has included the grant funding for new equipment and the Community Vision project. We are currently half - way through the pilot project.

Our regular user forums are one way in which you can contribute to the future developments of the organisation. Our next User Forum is on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm, at The Bradbury Centre. All are welcome. Please do let us know if you are attending, so we can ensure seating and refreshments.

## ***Macular Support Group***

Following the recent Macular information event, the Macular Society would like to start a support group for anyone with macular conditions including friends and family. There will be an initial meeting to find out how much interest there is in setting up a group on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January from 10.30am – 12.30pm at Kendal Town Hall. If you would like to join us or would like to know more please contact Michelle Dutton on 0161 286 9029 or 07950 424 586.

## ***Kendal Museum***

**Like museums? Like cream tea?**

**You'll love Tour, Talk and Tea at Kendal Museum!**

**For just £12.00 per person, you and your friends will be given a tour of the Museum by a member of staff and an informal talk about the history of the museum and its fascinating collections.**

**When booking, let us know if there is something within our collections which holds special interest to you, as we may be able to focus on that specifically. You will then be served with a cream tea (scone, jam and cream, plus tea/coffee) in our welcoming hospitality area.**



**Tour and Talk takes approximately 45 minutes,**

**Cream Tea 30 - 40 minutes.**

**Please Note: Booking essential. Larger groups may be accommodated, please check with us. Some galleries may not be accessible to individuals. We can take artefacts to an accessible location as long as we're given notice.**

**To book call 01539 815597 or email [info@kendalmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@kendalmuseum.org.uk)  
Kendal Museum, Station Road, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 6BT  
Open Thursday to Saturday 09.30–16.45**

**[www.kendalmuseum.org.uk](http://www.kendalmuseum.org.uk)**

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

**NB: Unless otherwise stated, all activities and events take place at  
Sight Advice South Lakes, The Bradbury Centre, 116  
Highgate, Kendal, LA9 4HE**

**March 2020**

<b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice Office Closed until 11.30am for team training</b>	
<b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Quiz Night at The Globe, Kendal</b>	<b>7.30pm prompt start</b>
	<b>Fundraising Event</b>	
<b>Tues 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group</b>	<b>2.00 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Maude Street Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>10am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>9.30am - 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tech know How: Associated Optical</b>	<b>10.30am - 1.30pm</b>
<b>Thur 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Dominoes</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Fri 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Support Group</b>	<b>10am – 11.45am</b>
	<b>*Please note new meeting date:</b>	
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month*</b>	
<b>Sat 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Children and Young People: Snowability Skiing.</b>	
	<b>Please contact Alicia for more details</b>	
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kendal Support Group –</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
	<b>including User Forum</b>	
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice User Forum</b>	<b>2.00pm – 3.00pm</b>
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Positive Steps Course – Week 1</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
	<b>Kendal</b>	
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Support Group</b>	<b>10 – 11.45am</b>
	<b>Goodly Dale, Windermere</b>	
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Walking Group: Cartmel Park</b>	<b>Please contact us for more details</b>
<b>Mon 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
	<b>Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	
<b>Mon 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>*New* Try Before you Buy - see page 8 for more information</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Tues 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sedbergh Support Group</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
	<b>People's Hall, Sedbergh</b>	

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<b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Helme Chase Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>9.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Get Set up on Social Media</b>	<b>10.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Positive Steps in Kendal – Week 2</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Thur 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon:</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
	<b>Play your Cards Right</b>	
<b>Mon 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Volunteer Training:</b>	<b>10.00am – 12noon</b>
	<b>Dementia Awareness with Dignity in Dementia</b>	
<b>Mon 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Ambleside Group</b>	<b>2.30 – 4.00pm</b>
	<b>Rowan court, Rothay Road, Ambleside</b>	
<b>Wed 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Positive Steps in Kendal – Week 3</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Thur 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Initial Macular Support Group Meeting</b>	<b>10.30am – 12.30pm</b>
<b>Sat 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Coffee and Craft Morning</b>	<b>09.30 – 12noon</b>
	<b>Demonstrations and Sale of Crafts</b>	
	<b>Unitarian Chapel, Market Place, Kendal</b>	
<b>Mon 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Bingo Night at The Globe</b>	<b>7.30pm prompt start</b>

## **April 2020**

<b>Wed 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Maude Street Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>10.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>9.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Dominoes</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Fri 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Support Group</b>	<b>10.00 - 11.45am</b>
	<b>*Please note new meeting date:</b>	
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month*</b>	
<b>Mon 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice Office Closed until 11.30am for staff training</b>	
<b>Tue 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group</b>	<b>2.00 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Support Group</b>	<b>10.00am–</b>
	<b>Goodly Dale, Windermere</b>	<b>11.45am</b>
<b>Wed 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Walking Group: Rydal Water</b>	<b>Please contact us for more details</b>
<b>Sat 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Street Collection: Kendal</b>	<b>All Day</b>
	<b>All volunteers welcome to join us</b>	
<b>Mon 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice Office Closed All Day – Bank Holiday</b>	

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<b>Tues 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Get Set up on Social Media</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Wed 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Helme Chase Surgery Advice Drop in</b>	<b>9.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Quiz</b>	<b>2.00pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Fri 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Future Vision Exhibition at Kendal Town Hall</b>	<b>10.00am – 2.00pm</b>
<b>Fri 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Coffee Morning at Kendal Town Hall Alongside the Future Vision Exhibition</b>	<b>10.00am - 2.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>*New* Try Before you Buy - see page 8 for more information</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Tues 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Sedbergh Support Group People's Hall, Sedbergh</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>ASDA Kendal – Store Collection All volunteers welcome to join us</b>	<b>All Day</b>
<b>Sat 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Children and Young People: Bee Keeping</b>	<b>Please contact Alicia for details</b>
<b>Mon 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Ambleside Support Group Rowan Court, Rothay Road, Ambleside</b>	<b>2.30pm – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Thur 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Dominoes</b>	<b>2.00pm- 4.00pm</b>
<b>May 2020</b>		
<b>Fri 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Support Group *Please note new meeting date: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month*</b>	<b>10.00 – 11.45am</b>
<b>Mon 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice Office closed for Staff Training until 11.30am</b>	
<b>Tues 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group</b>	<b>2.00 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Wed 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Maude Street Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>10.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>9.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Thur 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tech Know How: Discussion and Demonstration</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Mon 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kendal Support Group</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>



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<b>Wed 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Get Set up on Social Media</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Wed 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Windermere Support Group Goodly Dale, Windermere</b>	<b>10.00am – 11.45am</b>
<b>Wed 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Walking Group: Roudsea Wood Nature Reserve</b>	<b>Please contact us for more details</b>
<b>Thur 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon: Play your Cards Right</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Mon 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arnside Support Group Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Arnside</b>	<b>10.30am – 12noon</b>
<b>Mon 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>*New* Try Before you Buy - see page 8 for more information</b>	<b>1.30 – 3.30pm</b>
<b>Tues 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sedbergh Support Group People's Hall, Sedbergh</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Wed 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Helme Chase Surgery Advice Drop-in</b>	<b>9.00am – 12noon</b>
<b>Fri 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Football Session with Westmorland Football Association at Kendal Leisure Centre</b>	<b>5.00 – 6.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Street Collection: Wainwrights Yard, Kendal</b>	<b>All Day</b>
	<b>All volunteers welcome to join us</b>	
<b>Mon 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sight Advice Office Closed All Day – Bank Holiday</b>	
<b>Thur 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Games Afternoon</b>	<b>2.00 – 4.00pm</b>
<b>Sat 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Street Collection</b>	<b>All Day</b>
	<b>All volunteers welcome to join us</b>	

### **Future Events:**

<b>Mon 1<sup>st</sup> June</b>	<b>Quiz Night at the Duke of Cumberland</b>
<b>Fri 5<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>“Strawberry Fields Forever” Beatles Tribute – Live Music at The Unitarian Chapel Organised by Roger and Fiona Walker-Gwilliam Tickets available on the door</b>
<b>Mon 15<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Bingo Night at The Globe, Kendal</b>
<b>Wed 17<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Sedbergh Street Collection</b>
<b>Sat 27<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Windermere and Bowness Street Collection</b>
<b>Mon 29<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>VITAL Quiz Night at Netherfield Cricket Club Raising money for the VITAL Social Group</b>

The Children and Young People's Project is in full swing of organising lots of exciting activities for our members. The final skiing sessions are happening in March. If this takes anyone's fancy please speak to Alicia, as we hope to get involved again next Autumn. The project continuously works with other organisations to provide the best support and opportunities for our children and young people. We have made good links with the Westmorland Football Association.



Starting on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May they are putting on a series of ten football sessions, for Children and Young People with a visual impairment or sight loss. These are going to be held at Kendal Leisure Centre from 5.00-6.00pm. If you would like more information, please do speak to Alicia. We are all very excited to have this opportunity.

Just looking back over the last few months, we have had a brilliant time watching an audio described Cinderella production at the Duke's Theatre in Lancaster. The touch tour was also enjoyed by everyone at this event. Another extremely successful trip was to the Velodrome in Manchester in early February. This was once again an amazing opportunity for some of our Young People. Huge thanks to the Fred Whitton Challenge for funding this trip.

Our Children and Young People's Project can help in different ways. We really can offer the appropriate support for individuals. This may be in the form of offering some one-to-one support, attending meetings in school, support around key transitions and also helping with independence skills.

We have recently had some more new referrals and we welcome you all to the project.

Please do contact Alicia if you would like more information on [alicia@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:alicia@sightadvice.org.uk) or 01539 769055.

When people ask how many volunteers we have, they are often surprised at the answer. At present we have 144 registered volunteers, which is fantastic for such a small charity. The volunteers are active in every strand of our services, from administration to client support. Some of our volunteers are doing what they do every week, some, every month, some as and when they are needed. They contribute every day to the sense of belonging and community in Sight Advice.



It is increasingly difficult to encourage people to volunteer as people work longer and have caring responsibilities, so we should never take our volunteers for granted. We want to show how valued our volunteers are and to encourage other people to try us out at Sight Advice. We think the best people to do this are yourselves. We would like to talk to anyone who has had volunteer support, whether this is as part of a community group or with an individual volunteer. We don't have the budget of Sam Mendes and we can't promise an Academy Award, however Amy and I would like to take a few video clips of people talking about their experiences. If you want to take part in this, please contact us and we can arrange a visit. The clips will be very informal, short and fun!

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Living in such a rural area, where transport can be difficult at the best of times, our support groups provide an invaluable link to the community for a lot of our members. They provide safe and supportive spaces for members to come together to share experiences; speak openly about challenges and share information. The groups help to reduce the isolation and loneliness that can often come with visual impairment, particularly for those members who live in areas where there is a lack of wider support and services. The results can be astounding with members often trying new things and feeling more positive.

We have six community groups supporting people throughout the South Lakes. These groups are wholly run by volunteers who do everything from ensuring room bookings, managing the funds, organising speakers and transport, to making the tea. They keep

people in contact with their community, know when members become ill or need some extra support and ensure they are kept in touch with Sight Advice. In this way, they enable support to be given as soon as it is identified and most needed. A number of our groups are being kept going by one volunteer and they really need some extra hands, so if you or someone you know, feels they can help and want to find out more, please do get in touch.

### ***Wednesday Social***

The monthly social, which starts this year on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, is usually held on the second Wednesday of the month, 7.00pm – 9.00pm at the Kendal Day Centre in Dowker Lane. The evening is fun and lively; for people who enjoy music, games and even film nights.

The dates for this year are:

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020

If you would like to join an evening, please contact the office on 01539 769055. The Rotary very kindly offer transport to and from the evening if you need it. If you do want transport, please let us know.

### ***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. The next VITAL meeting is on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, any new members would be welcome.

Please email Chris Jackson if you would like to attend:

[chrisg.jackson13@gmail.com](mailto:chrisg.jackson13@gmail.com)

## ***Walking Group***

The Sight Advice South Lakes Walking Group is a friendly and supportive group, which goes out every month during the spring and summer months. The walks are between three and four miles and every member of the Walking Group is supported by their own individual volunteer walking guide. Transport to and from the walks can also be arranged. All you need is a sandwich and cake etc for your lunch, although sometimes café stops are also on the agenda. This year's calendar of walks is below:

Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	-	Cartmel Park
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	-	Rydal
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	-	Roudsea Wood Nature Reserve
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	-	Crook O'Lune
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> July	-	Tarn Hows
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	-	Cunswick Scar
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	-	Bolton le Sands
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	-	Elterwater

Sheila, the Group Leader and organiser has added two new walks for this year. New volunteer Rob will be introducing the group to Roudsea Wood, which will be very interesting with all his knowledge. Sheila researches the walks for suitability. Sheila has

visited the old railway line at the Crook O'Lune, which has two points in its favour, great location and a little café serving bacon/sausage baps, which I am sure will prove popular.





Recently, we covered the topic of children's eye care. Following on from this, there is the issue of myopia (short sightedness) and the increasing incidence of this condition along with the ocular health issues it can cause.



Recent research suggests that by 2050 half the world's population could be myopic. This will be around 5 billion people compared to the current level of 1.4 billion people. Myopia can be caused by two factors. In refractive myopia the eye's lens is too strong, or, in the far more prevalent axial myopia, it is caused by the elongation of the eye. The issue with elongation of the eye is that the structures inside the eye don't grow along with the eyeball. This effectively puts more pressure on the internal structures of the eye and in turn increases the prevalence of conditions such as glaucoma, macula degeneration and retinal detachment. Risk factors for myopia include family history (one or both parents myopic) and too much time indoors, especially performing near vision tasks. Children who on average spend more than an hour and a half outside every day are significantly less likely to become myopic than those who don't. It has also been demonstrated that not wearing glasses when myopic increases the likelihood of myopic progression.

Fortunately, a lot of research has gone into reducing myopia and a number of options are available to try to limit progression. These often include the use of contact lenses but there is also some research into using some low dose eye drops to try to help.

With contact lenses there are currently three options available- Ortho-keratology, MiSight daily lenses and centre-distance multifocal contact lenses. Ortho-keratology involves wearing a contact lens only while sleeping. This gently re-shapes the front of the eye while you are asleep and means that you can see clearly without glasses or contact lenses during the day (you take them out when you wake up). The way it corrects the front of the eye has been demonstrated to reduce myopic progression. MiSight daily disposable contact lenses have been specifically developed to reduce myopic progression and include an innovative design to achieve this. Centre-distance multifocal contact lenses have also

been shown to work and are available for those already with a higher prescription.

The above options have been shown to reduce the level of myopia at the end of progression by around 60% and when it comes to reducing the incidence of ocular conditions, it is evident that every step counts. It should also be remembered that myopia can be limited but not reversed.

## ***Positive Steps***

***Tim Ward***

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 that is available.

Positive Steps also provides the opportunity to meet other people with sight loss. The aim of Positive Steps is to help you maintain your independence. Here is what a previous participant said about attending the Positive Steps course.



***“I didn’t realise how much support was available and meeting other people with the same difficulties made me feel part of a “team”***

The next course starts in March and each week covers a different aspect of sight loss.

- **Week 1 March 11<sup>th</sup> – What is sight loss?** This focuses on the different eye conditions and how they develop and affect people.
- **Week 2 March 18<sup>th</sup> - How aids and technology such as lighting, magnification and new technology can help with the problems of sight loss.**
- **Week 3 March 25<sup>th</sup> - How to continue leisure activities while living with sight loss.**

As well as finding out about the help and support available, the sessions also offer an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation and get practical advice and information. Try a variety of daily living aids and new technology such as kitchen aids, magnifiers, Alexa and iPad/phone and hear how others live with sight loss and manage daily tasks.

All sessions are from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm at the Bradbury Centre, Kendal. Anyone is welcome to join the course - you can have sight loss or know someone who does. To reserve your place, please contact Tim Ward on 01539 76905.

## ***Fundraising News***

***Aileen Ward***

None of the support, services and activities we shared in this magazine would be possible without extensive and continuous fundraising to ensure the work that Sight Advice carried out across our region is sustained.

We had a fantastic few months at Sight Advice South Lakes and have raised just under £4000. This wouldn't have been possible without our community friends, volunteers, supporters and everyone who attend events. These ranged from Ceilidh to 'John Denver at Christmas', to a poetry evening to street and store collections and our collection boxes. Also, of course there are our regular quiz and bingo nights.



We have more, much more to come over the next few months and we would be delighted to welcome you at any of our upcoming events.

### ***Bingo and Quiz***

We are holding a Quiz Night on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March and a Bingo Night on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> March. These events will be at The Globe Inn, Kendal and led by our fundraising team members. All are welcome. Please see our What's On pages for more details.

We have a team of young swimmers entering the Kendal Rotary Club Annual Swimathon on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> at Kendal Leisure Centre. If you would like to make a donation towards our teams sponsorship total please let us know or visit our secure online giving page on our website <http://sightadvice.org.uk/get-involved/make-a-donation/> (please state 'for swimathon')

### ***Crafts and Coffee Mornings***

- On Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March at The Unitarian Chapel with delicious Easter themed cakes, crafts demonstrations, goods for sale, raffle. The £1 entry fee includes a drink and biscuit.

## **Sight Advice Magazine – Spring 2020**

- On Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> April at Kendal Town Hall, we are hosting a coffee morning and refreshments. While you are with us, you will also be able to visit our Annual Future Vision Exhibition, also at Kendal Town Hall between 10am-3pm. Please see the What's on pages for more details.

### ***Street and Store Collections***

As ever, we have a full calendar of Street and Store collections. We always welcome new collectors and would love to hear from anyone who feels they can offer 1 hour of their time at any of the collections. Upcoming collections are listed in the What's On pages and looking ahead we will be at ASDA Kendal on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> November. Please do get in touch if you are available to support the collections.

And finally, on Friday June 5<sup>th</sup> a number of our supporters are organising a fundraising night when the money raised will be shared between Sight Advice South Lakes and The Unitarian Chapel. Beatles loving band 'Strawberry Fields' are kindly performing free of charge. For more details please contact Sight Advice South Lakes on 01539 769055.

Take care all and remember....

'The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention' – Oscar Wilde

### ***Readers' Forum***

During a recent Users' Forum, it was suggested that we have a readers' section of the Magazine where you can send in your recipes, useful hints and tips or information that you think other readers may find useful and interesting.

If you have something that you would like to include in a future magazine, please send it to [amy@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:amy@sightadvice.org.uk). We will include as many as we can – we look forward to receiving your contributions.

## ***Staff and Trustee Team***

<p><b><u>Sight Advice South Lakes Team</u></b></p> <p><b><i>Chief Executive</i></b> Claire Park</p> <p><b><i>Service Manager</i></b> Amy Pearman</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i></b> <b><i>(Assistive Technology)</i></b> Tim Ward</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i></b> <b><i>(Community Development)</i></b> Peter Knock</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i></b> <b><i>(Community Development)</i></b> Jackie Bateman</p> <p><b><i>Volunteer Support Officer</i></b> Julie Halford</p>	<p><b><i>Young People and Children's Coordinator</i></b> Alicia Makinson</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Advisers</i></b> Sarah Stoddard Krystyna Slosarska</p> <p><b><i>Eye Clinic Liaison Officer</i></b> Jackie Bateman Sarah Stoddard</p> <p><b><i>Finance Officer</i></b> Emma Barker</p> <p><b><i>Fundraising Coordinator</i></b> Aileen Ward</p> <p><b><i>Housekeeping</i></b> Diane Boulder</p>
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**Promoting independent living**

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