



**Summer 2021
Magazine**

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Sight Advice South Lakes

As the coronavirus continues to have significant impact on our communities, we are continuing to adapt our services to ensure that we support people with sight loss whilst protecting people’s health and acting in the best interest of our members, our staff and the wider community.

Our office remains closed for drop-in visitors. However, we are offering one to one support through home visits and by telephone during normal working hours: Monday-Thursday, 9.30am-4.00pm. We are continuing with our online support, advice and guidance. Please contact us to receive an up to date “What’s On” guide.

We continually review our services to ensure we are operating in a Covid-19 Secure environment, and groups and activity groups will return when it is safe to do so.

If you feel you, or someone you know, would benefit from an appointment or consultation, please call 01539 769055 or email info@sightadvice.org.uk.

Welcome to our Summer magazine.



I hope I find our readers and their families safe and well. In light of the government roadmap, we are delighted to inform you that, having worked on developing our own roadmap, over the next few months we will slowly begin to recommence face to face support. We will do this through our highly valued home visits and booked appointments at the Bradbury Centre. We are taking a cautious and careful approach but are pleased that we are now in a position to start moving forward and get back to doing what we love.

We will continue to hold some of our popular groups over Zoom as these have provided a great level of support for people over the past 13 months. From April 2020 – March 2021 we had over 3500 attendees at the various events that were held online. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to the staff team for their flexibility and motivation during the past 13 months, which has enabled us to continue to provide support for people living with sight loss locally.

In February, James Carey joined the team at Sight Advice South Lakes as our new Services Manager. James is an experienced manager who has previously worked in the sight loss sector working for Action for Blind People/RNIB within their Children and Young People Services. We are delighted to have James join us, James introduces himself further on page 4.

Following our recent AGM over the Summer we will be undertaking a trustee recruitment programme to strengthen our existing board. We are particularly keen to have trustees join us with HR, Business and Marketing experience.

In line with our constitution we also have a vacancy for an individual living with a visual impairment to join our Board. All board members must fully participate in the meetings, understand their role and governance responsibilities and be able to contribute to the decision-making process.

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The Board currently consists of four members who work closely with myself on leading the Charity. If you would like to learn more about the role, then please contact me at claire@sightadvice.org.uk, or if you know someone who would be interested and could add value to our Charity, then please share amongst your contacts.

Once again if you are feeling lonely or find yourself struggling, please pick up the phone and give us a call. We can offer support and set up regular calls with our fantastic volunteer befrienders or signpost you to other support available locally.

Finally, stay safe, stay positive and keep smiling.

New Services Manager Introduction

James Carey

Hello everyone and thank you for welcoming me to the Sight Advice South Lakes family.

In early April I joined the team, replacing Amy Pearman as the Services Manager, having previously supported blind and visually impaired people whilst working at Action for Blind People, the RNIB and the Lighthouse for the Blind, based in San Francisco. I have a background in youth work, social care and community development.



I have really enjoyed my first few months at Sight Advice South Lakes, having had the privilege of getting to know both the staff team and meeting many of our volunteers and clients through attending our online and telephone events.

In addition to getting to know everyone and learning about the organisation, I have been working hard on plans to help reopen Sight Advice, once lockdown has ended and help bring back some of those amazing events and services that the organisation is famous for.

I am looking forward to welcoming the Sight Advice team and our volunteers back to the Bradbury Centre as soon as is safe to do so, and I hope to have the opportunity to meet some of you personally over the coming months.

Hello everyone. I do hope you are keeping well and feeling more optimistic for the future.

I wanted to share with you, on behalf of the trustees, a number of changes to our constitution that were agreed at the AGM in March.

Do please take a moment to read about these changes as they are relevant to everyone and I am hoping that at least some of you will consider becoming a Voting Member or a Trustee after you have read about the changes.

Sight Advice South Lakes was established as a charity in 1956. Individuals with sight loss, their families and interested parties recognised the benefits of coming together, raising funds and supporting each other through very challenging journeys. Their vision was very much as it is now, to support each other to enable as joyful and meaningful a life as possible. These original members of the charity elected the Trustees who were, and indeed are, entrusted to run the charity on their behalf. The Constitution was written by these original members; a rule book of sorts to both appease the Charity Commission and steer the Trustees in developing and running the charity. Over the years, Sight Advice South Lakes has developed and thrived but has also diverged, sometimes usefully sometimes less usefully, from the Constitution.

At the AGM a number of changes were agreed to bring the way we work now in line with the Constitution and indeed, vice-versa. The most important of these changes is to clarify and re-establish the role and the purpose of the charity members.

The current Trustees believe, as did the original Trustees, that we are all members of the charity in the sense that we are one body in supporting its work. We support each other and contribute in whatever way we can to make it successful. Some of us are volunteers, some of us support events, some of us raise money, some of us work for the charity as an employee, some of us support the charity by benefiting from what it offers and in turn advocating and recommending its work to others. We are all important to the charity as ambassadors.

We would like to strengthen this notion of us all being members of the charity. There will be no expectation of members over and

above these roles that we play. Everyone will be kept in the loop, invited to the AGM and offered our newsletter. However, we do need some members to play an enhanced role. We will call these members 'Voting Members'.

Voting Members will have an important role. They will be responsible for electing the Trustees and holding them to account in delivering the charity's aims effectively. Primarily, these duties are discharged through the Annual General Meeting, during which the Trustees describe the year's work and the financial situation to the members, and members elect proposed Trustees. Some of our members have played this part over the years and we are extremely grateful to them. However, over the years, their number has fallen and we have allowed their important role to become eroded and unclear.

So, in essence, we are looking to a future where we are all members of the charity; the charity is steered by the Board of Trustees and Voting Members step up from the membership to keep a watchful eye on the effectiveness of the board.

In the coming weeks we will be communicating with all of you to ask you if you are happy to be recorded as a Member; to find out what role you currently provide within the charity and whether you would be interested in hearing more about being a Trustee or a Voting Member as we move forward.

Helping Ourselves Out of Lockdown

Sarah Stoddard

The past year has been a challenging one for a lot of people for a lot of reasons. After all the uncertainty and changes in our lives, it is understandable that whilst some of us will be looking forward to getting out and about again and resuming our regular activities, for others the opposite might well be the case. We may be feeling fearful and anxious and have lost confidence.



With everything that has happened, not least the number of lives that have been lost and all the different messages we have been given, such a response is hardly surprising. Looking forwards beyond the vaccination programme and the easing of restrictions,

things are changing. It is important that we are aware of how we are reacting and to try and 're-train' our minds to thinking about what we can do in this so-called 'new normal'.

It is also important to recognise that what we have learned during the past year is not all bad. We have realised how resourceful we can be, communicating in different ways and managing with less. For some of us, too, an increased awareness of our surroundings may have brought a new appreciation of life.

So, what can you do to help yourself?

Try to be as healthy as you can - eat as healthily as you can, drink plenty of water, and get enough sleep. Just by doing these basic things, and in making yourself and your surroundings as comfortable as possible, you will put yourself in a stronger position to cope with life generally.

Try to stay active – indoors as well as outdoors. It may be that you do not have a lot of space to do this, so you may need to be creative. That said, doing something is always better than doing nothing.

Have a task or goal in mind - try to keep these small enough and manageable enough to make them achievable. That way, you are more likely to finish what you started and be motivated to carry on.

Connect with others - possibly one of the hardest things for us to do sometimes, but also, arguably, one of the most important. If you have not already (and it is never too late!), you might decide to join one of Sight Advice's regular Zoom sessions or BABL groups. Or, alternatively, you could have a call from one of our Volunteer Befrienders.

Focus on what you can control - a lot of what has gone on during the pandemic has been out of our control. However, this has not stopped us from worrying about it. As with any worry you have, if you can do something about it, do it, and if you cannot do anything, try to let it go.

Finally, it is worth reminding yourself that we are all human, and we all have good days and bad. You just need to try and focus on the good and be kind to yourself.

Lockdown restrictions have been with us for well over a year now, and here at Sight Advice South Lakes we have adapted the Assistive Technology service to best meet people's needs under the national guidance.



As many of you will know, we moved the monthly “Tech Know-How” sessions to a fortnightly spot by Zoom at 10:00am every alternate Wednesday. We also asked technology companies to undertake demonstrations of their latest equipment. They were only too happy to do this and some also undertook home visits to demonstrate in people's homes. They are continuing to do this.

This approach gained the attention of some other small sight loss charities, keen to provide Assistive Technology support despite Covid restrictions. As a result, we have now joined up with five other charities and will be working together to present monthly technology ‘workshops’. These will be based on themes such as looking at the latest ‘apps’ or comparing different screen-readers such as Jaws, Dolphin and Narrator. For each event we hope to bring in an expert, who uses the technology and who will demonstrate practical ways to use it in everyday life.

We will still have monthly demonstrations from the larger companies, as we recognise that there are always people new to Assistive Technology who have not experienced products such as electronic video magnification or devices that talk.

Now we are able to offer two Zoom events per month – one being a product demonstration and the other a practical ‘workshop’. Details of these can be found in the “What's On” section.

I am currently working on plans to introduce a ‘remote access’ service, whereby I will be able to access people's computers, tablets and laptops to help make adjustments to font sizes, contrast, download key apps and turn on speech. I hope to have more information about this soon.

Most importantly, I am now able to provide home visits where necessary. So, if you or someone you know requires support with Assistive Technology, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Update on resuming Community Support services:

With further easing of the lockdown expected, we have been able to put plans in place for how we will resume the services which we have had to stop or alter during lock down.

On the 4 May, our staff team returned to working from the Bradbury Centre, although the doors remain closed to the public.

Telephone Support

We will continue to offer assessments to people over the phone. These assessments enable us to offer advice and support and to refer people to other services as needed. If people would benefit from aids and equipment to help them remain as independent as possible, we are able to arrange this for them or direct them to places where they can get these for themselves.

Home Visits

We restarted our home visits on 4 May, although we will continue to offer telephone assessments. Where we agree with a client that a home visit is needed (perhaps to advise on lighting, to demo equipment or to drop off items at their home) we plan to be able to do this. We will aim to keep our visits short, usually no longer than 30 minutes and will aim to do as much as we can over the phone. Before the visit, we will be required to ask some Covid related questions and during the visit we will wear face coverings and try to maintain social distancing.

All of our staff conducting home visits have received two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine and will be testing twice per week.

Bradbury Centre Appointments

We hope to reopen the Bradbury Centre to drop-in visitors at some point after 21 June, however appointments can be booked at the Bradbury Centre from 17 May for those people who have a clear need to visit us. We will aim to keep office appointments short, usually no longer than 30 minutes and so will prepare for the visit as much as we can over the phone beforehand. Before the visit, we will ask some Covid related questions and for details of who will be coming with you.

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We have rearranged our reception and meeting room to allow social distancing and we will wear and use appropriate PPE.

Low Vision Clinic Assessments

We ran our first post-lockdown Low Vision Clinic on Tuesday 18 May. People referred to the clinic are offered an appointment at the Bradbury Centre but may only enter the building at the exact time given. Once at the clinic, they will meet our Ophthalmologist for an eye test and receive advice on low vision aids before having the opportunity to get further advice from one of our Sight Advice Community Development Coordinators. We will use two rooms for this and people visiting the clinic will be socially distanced from our staff and from other clients.

Support Groups and Social Activities

During the pandemic, we suspended our face-to-face support groups and social activities. From 4 May, we opened the door to restarting group activities which can be held safely outdoors. This will be for both children and adults.

The pandemic has given us the opportunity to develop online and telephone-based alternatives to our face-to-face groups and activities. Our aim is to continue to offer online (Zoom) and telephone (BABL) meetings and activities until we feel confident that the members of those groups wish to return face-to-face and we feel it is safe to do so. We will keep everyone updated on these developments.

Getting Back to ‘Normal’

We are pleased that we have been able to continue to support people during the pandemic and very much hope we can soon return to offering services closer to the way they used to be.

If you, or someone you know, has sight loss and thinks that we may be able to help, or just wants to find out what we can offer, please ring us on 01539 769055. Our phone lines are open as normal 9.30am to 4.00pm Mondays to Thursdays. If we are busy when you call, please leave a message and we will get back to you.

What's On Summer 2021 - For you to pull out and keep

Unless stated otherwise, all activities and events take place using Zoom or BABL with the capability for you to telephone in to join. The event will state which application it uses.

We know that these are confusing and trying times, so please do ring if you would like support to access any of the sessions or have any questions. It is what we are here for!

Using Zoom

Unless stated just click this link to access Sight Advice Zoom meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4580437872>

Alternatively go to <https://zoom.us/join> and use the following meeting ID for all events:

458 043 7872

If you wish to join from a landline telephone, please dial:
0203 481 5237 and when asked enter the Meeting ID
458 043 7872

You might be asked to enter hash at the end also (bottom right button on your phone dial). The call may be charged at a local rate, however if, like many people, you have a free calls package it will probably be free. If in doubt, please check with your phone provider.

Using BABL

People will be dialled in, please get in touch to be added to the meeting list. Your phone will ring at the time of the session, answer your phone and you will be asked to press the hash (#) key and you are in the session.

Alternatively, you can dial 0330 606 1118, just after the stated time of the event and enter the room code 436173. Please dial in; if you have Call Guardian on your phone, DO NOT disable it to access these sessions. The call is free from landlines but not mobiles.

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June 2021

Tues 1st	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Thurs 3rd	1pm	'Get into Volunteering' Event with CVS – Zoom (contact for details)
Thurs 3rd	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 4th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Tues 8th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie – Zoom
Tues 8th	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group – BABL
Wed 9th	10am	'Future Vision' Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 10th	10am	'Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss' with Tim & 6 other sight loss organisations - Zoom
Thurs 10th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime – BABL
Fri 11th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Mon 14th	10am	Kendal Community Group – BABL
Tues 15th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie – Zoom
Thurs 17th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 18th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Fri 18th	7.30pm	'Quingo Night' with Aileen (£5 registration) - Zoom
Mon 21st	10.30am	Arnside Community Group - BABL
Tues 22nd	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie – Zoom
Tues 22nd	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group - BABL
Thurs 24th	10am	'Future Vision' Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 24th	11am	Kendal and district AMD Group. Contact Jackie at Sight Advice who can pass your details on to the Group Leader.
Thurs 24th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 25th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Tues 29th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie – Zoom

July 2021

Thurs 1st	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 2nd	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Tues 6th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie – Zoom
Thurs 8th	10am	‘Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss’ with Tim & 6 other sight loss organisations - Zoom
Thurs 8th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 9th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Mon 12th	2pm	Kendal Community Group – BABL
Tues 13th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Tues 13th	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group - BABL
Wed 14th	10am	‘Future Vision’ Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 15th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 16th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Mon 19th	10.30am	Arnside Community Group - BABL
Tues 20th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Thurs 22nd	10am	‘Future Vision’ Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 22nd	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 23rd	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Tues 27th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Tues 27th	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group - BABL
Thurs 29th	11am	Kendal and district AMD Group. Contact Jackie at Sight Advice who can pass your details on to the Group Leader.
Thurs 29th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 30th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom

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Tues 3rd	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Thurs 5th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime
Fri 6th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Mon 9th	10am	Kendal Community Group - BABL
Tues 10th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Tues 10th	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group - BABL
Wed 11th	10am	‘Future Vision’ Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 12th	10am	‘Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss’ with Tim & 6 other sight loss organisations - Zoom
Thurs 12th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime
Fri 13th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Mon 16th	10.30am	Arnside Community Group BABL meeting with Tony and Linda
Tues 17th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Thurs 19th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 20th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
Tues 24th	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie - Zoom
Tues 24th	2pm	Sedbergh Community Group - BABL
Thurs 26th	10am	‘Future Vision’ Assistive Technology workshop with Tim - Zoom
Thurs 26th	11am	Kendal and district AMD Group. Contact Jackie at Sight Advice who can pass your details on to the Group Leader.
Thurs 26th	7pm	BABL At Bedtime - BABL
Fri 27th	10am	Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh - Zoom
<i>Monday 30th - Summer Bank Holiday - Office Closed</i>		
Tues 31st	2pm	Poetry and Literature Hour with Julie via Zoom

The support of volunteers during these turbulent times has been something that has been rightly highlighted in local and national press. Our Sight Advice volunteers have continued to support the charity with their efforts and their willingness to adapt to the circumstances.



With the easing of lockdown, you may feel worried or anxious about the change in circumstances. If you feel that you may need some extra support to help you overcome the challenge of resuming ‘normal’ life after lockdown, we are here to help.

Volunteers can support you in getting back out to do some of the things you enjoyed before lockdown. These might include making the most of the improving weather in the garden or the local park; finding out what has changed in the shops and cafes or, most importantly, helping you reconnect with your community and friends. Please do get in touch with any of us here for a confidential chat about the ways in which you would like to be supported. Changing your habits and routine after lockdown might be difficult but we are here to help and we can tackle it together!

Poetry Booklet... We have very kindly been donated 10 poetry booklets by a local poet who has a personal interest in Sight Advice. The booklet is called “Transience” and contains beautiful poems and accompanying photos with a Covid and lockdown theme, with many local places mentioned including Blind Beck and the Peace Column in Abbot Hall. Please do get in touch if you would like a copy. We suggest a minimum price of £5.50 including postage and packing.

If you, or someone you know, has some time to spare and would like to support a small local charity, please consider Sight Advice. Our volunteers provide valuable help to local people living with sight loss through telephone befriending, coordinating social groups and providing information and advice here at Bradbury Centre.

Finally, we would like to thank all of our volunteers for their incredible contribution and dedication during lockdown.

For more information on volunteering please email julie@sightadvice.org.uk or call 01539 769055.

At Sight Advice South Lakes we are eagerly looking forward to meeting up with all the families again and we are currently working on a programme of summer activities, many of which will be hosted in the wonderful outdoors.



In April and May some of our members were able to take part in some sporting events such as skiing at Kendal Snowsports Club and football with Westmorland Football Association. We would like to thank everyone involved for enabling our children and their families to have these experiences.

On Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th July we will be hosting adventure days at The Water Park Lakeland Adventure Centre, Coniston. Possible activities may include kayaking, canoeing and climbing - we ran similar events over an amazing summer of 2019 and I am very keen for this to happen again. Please do get in touch if you would like more details. Booking is essential.

Coming soon we also have alpaca petting, horse riding and other outdoor activities. We are always open to new ideas for activities too, so if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

Many of our children and young people are approaching different transitions in their lives, whether that be nursery to primary school; primary to secondary school or moving on to college, university or employment. We can provide practical support and advice to help with these transitions. This includes how to access assistive technology; support with independence skills; providing opportunities to meet other families who may be facing similar experiences and signposting to other useful organisations.

If you or someone you know would like to attend one of our events or may need some support please get in touch by either phone 07713015720 or email alicia@sightadvice.org.uk

Myopia Control - Prevention Is Better Than Cure

Myopia is another name for short sightedness and is usually caused by the elongation of the eye, which is not matched by growth of the internal structures. As a result, internal structures such as the retina, are put under more strain which can lead to an increase in the risk of developing glaucoma, macular degeneration or retinal detachments.



Risk factors for children becoming short sighted include family history of myopia and excessive time spent indoors performing close, visual tasks. It has been shown that children who spend on average, an hour and a half outdoors each day are less likely to become short sighted than those who spend more time indoors.

Currently, in the UK, there are contact lenses which can reduce myopic progression by creating a centrally focused image and slightly defocusing the peripheral vision. With this method, a specially fitted gas-permeable contact lens is worn overnight. This re-shapes the cornea (the window on the front of the eye) so that during the day clear sight is obtained without having to wear glasses or contact lenses. The way the contact lens re-shapes the cornea also has an effect on reducing the progression of Myopia.

Daily soft contact lenses can now also be used to control Myopia progression and there is a new spectacle lens which reportedly has a similar success rate to all of the above. This can, if desired, be worn alongside the soft contact lenses to create a flexible wearing schedule. Realistically, the data suggests around a 60% reduction in Myopia could be obtained with the above methods, hence reducing the risk of ocular complications in later life.

Although specialised, Myopia control is becoming a more typical type of work in the optometric sector and is an important development with promising results. It has been demonstrated that every step of myopic reduction makes a difference to long term ocular health, so Myopia control should always be considered as a treatment option for short sighted patients at risk of or showing myopic progression.

Eye Clinic Liaison Officer

Jackie Bateman

Eye Clinic Liaison Officers (ECLO) can advise on eye conditions, treatment, equipment, low vision aids, COVID-19 precautions within the eye clinics, as well as signposting to other services and much more. We are usually based in the eye clinic on Level 4 of Westmorland General Hospital.



If you wish to contact the ECLO then do please contact us on 01539 769055 (via Sight Advice South Lakes) & ask to speak to the ECLO or by emailing Jackie.bateman@mbht.nhs.uk Alternatively, please ask the clinic staff to send in a referral and we will be in touch as soon as we are able. Our details are displayed around the hospital on posters advising about the ECLO role.

Helping You Get Out and About

Peter Knock

The Covid restrictions and shielding have meant that many people have not be going out of the house as often as they used to. As restrictions start to ease, people are starting to go out more or are thinking of doing so. Some people may feel they lack confidence or have lost some of their mobility. Here are some product ideas and tips for people considering going out and about more...



Build up slowly... If you are planning to get out and about more, try to build this up slowly. Perhaps plan short trips first and maybe ask someone to go with you. Try to go out at quieter times of the day, especially if you are considering going to your local shops or supermarket. You can ask for assistance in advance of a supermarket trip if you feel you need support. You should contact Customer Services of the supermarket.

Don't forget... Don't forget to take a face mask for shops and transport and maybe a small bottle of hand sanitizer. If you usually use a walking stick, shopping trolley or walker, make sure you bring these with you. These will help you with your confidence outside. If you have a talking watch, don't forget this so you can

tell the time, especially if you have an appointment or are using public transport.

Have you thought about...?

As we head towards the summer months, you might find sunglasses or overglasses (sometimes called fitovers) useful to keep the sunlight out of your eyes and reduce glare. Some people find sports visors useful.



A small magnifier with lights which can fit in your pocket can help you to see products, prices and use-by dates when out shopping. If you don't have a magnifier and would like to try one, let us know as we may be able to refer you to our Low Vision Clinic for an assessment.

There are different types of white canes available. A symbol cane can fold away in your pocket and is carried to tell people around you that you have sight-loss. This will tell people that you might not be able to see them or may struggle with social distancing. People might also be more forthcoming to help you when you need it. You may prefer to use an 'I am visually impaired' badge available from The Macular Society to help people understand that you might not see them or items.



Other canes can help you with your mobility. They can assist you to feel for obstacles in your path like curbs, steps and 'A Board' signs, which some shops leave on the pavements outside their premises. The Rehabilitation Officer for Vision Impairment at Cumbria County Council can offer advice and training on use of these mobility canes.

Crossing roads can be difficult for some people. Always try to use a proper road crossing. You can feel for the whirling button underneath the mechanism of electronic crossings. This will vibrate when it is safe to cross. There are dimpled paving slabs near crossings which you may be able to feel with your feet. Using a symbol cane will tell drivers that you have sight loss and may not be able to see



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their car. Some people wear reflective tabards or arm bands to help them to be seen.

Someone to help you get out more ...

At Sight Advice, we may be able to arrange for a volunteer to help you get to somewhere important to you. This could be to visit shops, cafes, parks or gardens. You may feel that you would like some support to attend a social group or leisure activity.

If you would like to know more about any of the above, please contact the Sight Advice South Lakes office on 01539 769055.

Fundraising News

Aileen Ward

Hello there to our supporters and friends. Here is what has been happening with fundraising...

Bingo and Quiz nights have continued to be extremely popular and have also brought Sight Advice to the attention of new members of the public as well as our friends. Thank you to the leaders of these events - John Wilkinson and Diane Boulder (Bingo) and Chris and Eileen Jackson (Quizzes).



We had fantastic support for our online 'Creative Auction' in March. £827 was raised thanks to the donations of beautiful work from our members, volunteers, staff and from our fabulous 'creative' business community. I would like to give a massive thanks to everyone who took part either by donating or bidding. A big thank you also goes to Eileen and Bill who have continued to collect and empty our collection tins locally (where safe to do so).

A golden ticket draw, for a giant Easter egg and chocolates, was held in aid of Sight Advice and Guide Dogs by the Blind Chocolatier, Stuart Hann. The draw raised £287.50 between the two charities – thank you Stuart!

One of our volunteers Miriam Baird (Mim) is currently undertaking a challenge to walk 2,025.5 miles in 2021 and is hoping to raise £1000 for her four chosen charities. If you would like to read more or consider donating, please visit Miriam's Go Fund Me page at <https://gofund.me/31994c2f>. What an incredible effort!

What's next..?

Chris Jackson has been busy developing a 'fruit-themed' paper based fundraiser quiz. Chris's quizzes are very popular and give the brain a good work out. Cash prizes will be available too! If you aren't in touch with Chris, please let me know and I will pass your details on so that you can get hold of a copy and have a go.

Due to the ongoing government restrictions, I am still unable to confirm dates for future street or store collections. I will be in touch with all our collectors as soon as I have more information.

Due to the popularity of the online Quiz and Bingo nights we will continue to run them both monthly until further notice. We also hope to run a community based event again in the near future... I know I am not the only person out there looking forward to getting together once again to catch up and do a bit of dancing!

Do you enjoy quizzes, bingo, and fancy a fun night in with friends across our online community? Why not come along to 'Quingo Night' on Friday 18th June? There will be a quiz followed by three games of Bingo, with cash prizes for the winners on the night and all funds raised will go towards the work of Sight Advice South Lakes. Please join us and spread word with family and friends – everyone is welcome!

Finally, due to the success of our 'Creative Auction' I am hoping to run another auction in September. The theme of the next auction will be 'Autumn'. I am picturing warm woollens, cosy dinners, afternoon teas by the fire, a good malt, pampering products, new handbag, gym, golf or sports days, craftwork, board games, as just a few examples of possible prizes! If you have any items which you would like to donate or are in contact with a business who can help by making a donation of a prize, please let me know.

For more up-to-date information about fundraising events or to enquire about any of our fundraising activities, feel free to email me at aileen@sightadvice.org.uk.

Thank you everyone! Stay safe and well and I am really looking forward to meeting up with you this summer.

'Run, Walk, Crawl' Challenge

Krystyna Slosarska

In March and April several staff members and trustees from Sight Advice took part in the 'Run Walk Crawl' challenge. The challenge brought together participants from 32 sight loss charities who entered in teams of six hoping to 'Run, Walk or Crawl' 1240 miles over six weeks.



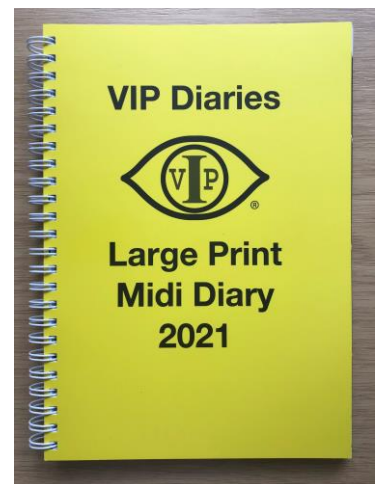
The event was organised by Stuart Clayton at Galloways as a way to improve the health and well-being of those working in the sight-loss sector during lockdown and to offer an opportunity for staff from those charities involved to get to know each other more.

VIP Diaries

Laura Garnett

Our catalogue will be on its way to you this summer in July and August and you will see that we have added some fabulous new products. These include a 'Gift Wrapped Gift Set' – great to send for either Christmas or birthdays.

You will also find our usual products that you know and love including large print diaries, clear contrast diaries, calendars, important reminders, greeting cards, Bumpons, large print crosswords, word searches and playing cards.



We have also added some products to support and complement our range including lighting and magnification tools to help people with varying levels of sight loss. We have listened to our customers tell us about their experiences and will continue to do so to help find the right solutions for you!

We are happy to take advance orders for your diaries - please give us a call on 01539 726613 or email info@vipdiaries.co.uk. Alternatively, you can return the order form attached to the catalogue or order from our website at www.vipdiaries.co.uk.

Sight Advice South Lakes Team

<p><i>Chief Executive</i> Claire Park</p> <p><i>Services Manager</i> James Carey</p> <p><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i> <i>(Assistive Technology)</i> Tim Ward</p> <p><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i> <i>(Community Development)</i> Jackie Bateman</p> <p><i>Sight Support Coordinator</i> <i>(Community Development)</i> Peter Knock</p> <p><i>Volunteer Support Officer</i> Julie Halford</p>	<p><i>Young People and Children's</i> <i>Project Coordinator</i> Alicia Makinson</p> <p><i>Sight Support Advisors</i> Sarah Stoddard Krystyna Slosarska</p> <p><i>Eye Clinic Liaison Officers</i> Jackie Bateman Sarah Stoddard</p> <p><i>Finance Officer</i> Emma Barker</p> <p><i>Fundraising Coordinator</i> Aileen Ward</p> <p><i>Housekeeping</i> Diane Boulder</p>
<p><i>Chair of Trustees</i> Dr Sal Riding</p> <p><i>Trustees</i> Mrs Linda Baverstock Miss Jenny Hodgkinson Mr Paul Blackburn</p>	



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