



**Spring 2024**  
**Magazine**

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***Sight Advice South Lakes***

Sight Advice South Lakes is here to support people who are struggling with doing everyday tasks because of their eyesight. We can help over the phone, online or through home visits. We can provide information or advice on eye conditions and equipment, (including simple aids or technology) and can refer you for advice to other organisations. We can also order some equipment for you.

Our office at the Bradbury Centre in Kendal is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am-4.00pm

Our key services include:

- home visits to assess your needs for aids, equipment and technology
- social activities and opportunities
- guidance and support with technology
- advice and information about eye health or eye condition
- events and activities for children and young people

Welcome to our Spring 2024 Magazine.

I would like to thank all the people who gave very generously to our Winter Appeal. Individual donations are so important to a small charity like ours and all money raised is spent on supporting services for local people living with a visual impairment. We received £750 in donations from our appeal – THANK YOU!



The trustees and staff of Sight Advice South Lakes warmly invite you to attend their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 1.30pm 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 and space!

As always, 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 positive, keep smiling – Spring is around the corner.

Caring for a family member with sight loss and other health conditions can be both rewarding and challenging. It requires patience, empathy, and adaptability, often demanding significant emotional, physical, and time commitments. While focusing on the needs of your loved one, you must also pay attention to your own mental health and well-being. Here are some strategies to help you take care of your mental health while caring for someone with sight loss:



### **1. Establish a Support Network**

**Seek Support:** Connect with other caregivers in similar situations through support groups, online forums, or community organisations. Sharing experiences and advice can provide comfort and practical tips for navigating challenges.

**Lean on Family and Friends:** Do not hesitate to ask for help. Sharing responsibilities can alleviate stress and provide much-needed breaks.

### **2. Prioritise Self-Care**

**Maintain Health and Well-being:** Ensure you are eating well, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly. Going for a short walk can be enough to boost your mood, be mindful, notice the sights, sounds, smell. Engage your senses to bring you into the present moment. You may be caring for someone else whilst coping with your own health concerns.

Taking time for yourself to recharge is important, do you enjoy listening to podcasts or books, reading a magazine or connecting with a friend? Maybe you have lost touch with things you enjoy, take a moment to write down things you like to do. Michael Mosley has a good podcast on Radio 4 called, 'Just one thing'. In it, he shares advice about little things you can do to boost your mood and your health and wellbeing.

### **3. Set Realistic Expectations and Boundaries**

**Manage Expectations:** Recognise that you are doing your best and that it is okay to have limits. Understand that some days will be harder than others and adjust your expectations accordingly.

**Establish Boundaries:** Set clear boundaries around caregiving tasks and personal time to prevent burnout. It is important to maintain aspects of your life that are independent of your caregiving role.

#### **4. Seek Professional Help When Needed**

**Counselling:** Therapists or counsellors can provide valuable support and coping strategies tailored to your situation. Consider seeking professional help if you are experiencing overwhelming stress, anxiety, or depression. Sight Advice are currently offering free counselling sessions for people with sight loss or if you are a carer for someone with sight loss.

**Respite Care:** Look into respite care options to give yourself a break. Temporary care services can allow you to recharge, reducing the risk of caregiver fatigue. Alternatively, contact [Carer Support South Lakes - Improving the lives of carers](#) they may be able to find a way to support you so that you can take a break.

#### **5. Educate Yourself**

**Learn About Sight Loss:** Understanding the specifics of your loved one's sight loss condition can help you provide better support and feel more in control.

**Access Resources:** Utilise resources and training designed for caregivers to enhance your skills and knowledge, they may help to make your caregiving tasks easier and more effective.

#### **6. Communicate Openly**

**Talk About Your Feelings:** If you feel comfortable to do so, discuss your feelings, concerns, and needs with trusted friends, family members, or a therapist. Expressing emotions is crucial for mental health.

#### **7. Celebrate the Positives**

**Acknowledge Achievements:** Recognise and celebrate both your achievements and those of your loved one, no matter how small. Focusing on positive aspects can boost morale for both of you.

## 8. Utilise Technology and Services

**Adopt Assistive Technologies:** Utilise technology designed to assist individuals with sight loss, potentially easing caregiving tasks and enabling greater independence for your loved one.

**Professional Services:** Consider employing professional services for specific tasks, such as home modifications, mobility training for your loved one, or personal care assistance.

Caring for someone with sight loss is a significant undertaking that requires balancing caregiving responsibilities with your personal needs and well-being. Implementing these strategies could help you maintain your mental health, ensuring that you can provide the best care for your loved one while also taking care of yourself.

### ***Eye Clinic Liaison Update Sarah Stoddard & Tim Ward***

Part of our job as ECLOs is to provide people with trusted and up to date information on various aspects of their eye condition/sight loss. One of the ways in which we are able to do this is to make copies of the various information leaflets produced by the bigger national sight loss organisations (e.g. Glaucoma UK, the Macular Society and the RNIB) readily and freely available to people – either to pick up from our office in Kendal or on the Eye Clinic at Westmorland General, or be posted out.



As you would expect, given the impact that any kind of sight loss can have on individuals, their family and friends, as well as people's need to maintain their independence and to simply do the best they can for themselves, there are certain titles that are more popular than others – e.g. driving, nutrition, etc.

We thought, therefore, that it might be quite useful to just summarise a few of the recommendations on the above subjects here in our Spring 2024 Magazine.

**Driving** – Having an eye condition such as glaucoma or macular degeneration does not automatically mean you have to stop driving. However, if your eye specialist says you have an eye

condition in both eyes, which cannot be corrected with prescription glasses, you have a legal duty to inform your driving licence authority, and should also inform your insurance company.

You may subsequently be sent for tests to assess your safety to drive – namely, visual acuity and visual field tests. The former measures the sharpness of your vision, whilst the latter measures your range of vision to the sides. You must have a visual acuity of at least 6/12 and be able to read a standard car number plate at 20 metres. A visual acuity of 6/12 means seeing at six metres what someone with normal vision can see at 12 metres.

**Nutrition** – a healthy diet is an important part of looking after your eyes. This is because certain nutrients protect the body from damaging substances called oxidants, which are thought to be partly responsible for cell degeneration in the eye.

Antioxidants, including Vitamins A, C and E, can reduce the effects of oxidants; as can certain carotenoids, e.g. lutein. Many of these substances can also only be obtained from food – some of the vegetables that have high amounts of lutein include kale, red pepper, spinach and broccoli.

Therefore, eating a healthy balanced diet, including at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, can help reduce your risk of suffering sight loss and a variety of common eye conditions.

For further information on these, and many more aspects of eye conditions/sight loss, you can contact the Sight Advice office on 01539 769055 and ask to speak to one of the ECLOs – Sarah or Tim.

Take care.

**A REMINDER RE COMMUNICATIONS PREFERENCES** - a communications preferences form can be obtained by contacting the Patient Experience Department at MBHT (Morecambe Bay Hospital Trust), on telephone 01229 404434 or email [patientexperience@mbht.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperience@mbht.nhs.uk). In this form, you are able to request information in audio, braille, easy read or large print options. You can also specify the best way to contact you, i.e. by telephone, text or email.



Alternatively, if you scan the QR code (to the right) a link will appear which will take you directly to the form/Department.



***Community Development    Jude Rogers & Jackie Bateman***

At Sight Advice South Lakes, we are keen to ensure that the message about our services and the support we can provide reaches all those people who need it. We are particularly interested in increasing our support to those with neurological conditions such as stroke patients, those living with dementia or



Parkinson's and other similar conditions. Did you know that about 65% of people who have experienced a stroke could develop sight issues? Although these sight issues can decrease within a few months of the stroke, a substantial number of people can continue to have ongoing issues in this area. This can affect their ability to participate in their everyday life. It is our aim to provide support in a timely manner when it is required.

This week, we have established links with members of the Stroke Team at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary as well as the local Stroke Association to make sure that appropriate referrals are made to Sight Advice South Lakes for those experiencing post-stroke sight loss. We are keen to develop further links with dementia services and other support organisations for neurological conditions in the area, in order to expand our network of help for people with these conditions. If you, or someone you are aware of in the South Lakes experiences sight loss linked to a neurological condition, please do contact us.

Once a referral is received, we will make contact to offer comprehensive support that addresses not only physical aspects but also the emotional and psychological needs of individuals struggling with sight impairments, related to a neurological condition. We may provide information about eye conditions or discuss with the individual about the difference between processing issues and sight loss and where appropriate, suggest coping strategies. We will work with you to find the best solutions, where possible, to enable you to participate in what is importance to you.



Our work with those with a neurological issue will also include our usual holistic assessment of how an individual's life is impacted by their sight condition. We can offer advice regarding equipment, improving the home environment such as recommending appropriate lighting and other advice including signposting to other services.

If you or a loved one struggles with sight issues related to a neurological condition, do make contact and we will see what we can do to support you.

**Online Community 2023 / 2024**

**Tim Ward**

Technology of all sorts can be used for many things. At Sight Advice, the Online Community has been running since 2020.

They were started so that Sight Advice and its community could stay in regular contact with each other during the first Lockdown, and it worked like a dream. Due to the high demand, we continued to run these groups and they continue to flourish to this day.



Even though it is online, Sight Advice has made sure that you do not need modern technology to take part, as a minimum just a landline phone.



Currently we have three online events:

1. An online weekly quiz.

On Friday at 10am, we run our weekly quiz. This has a steady audience of between 10 to 14 people, some people drop in occasionally, and this fine too.

**There are 20 general knowledge questions, delivered on Zoom, from the legendary Mr Quizo. Not too hard but enough to make you think. Lots of fun is had by all.**

## **2. Rainbow Group – Living Well and Future Vision.**

**The Rainbow Group is a national, award-winning group of five Sight loss charities, led and hosted by Sight Advice. These sessions provide Zoom meetings open to the general sight loss public. Again, you can phone in from your landline.**

**The Living Well sessions occur on the second Thursday of each month at 10.00 am, offerings range from national speakers giving talks about a health related topic e.g. genetic advances in eye health, an update on the work of Macular Society or an inspirational story e.g. The Blind Poet, to name a few. The average attendance varies from 10 to 60 but 20 would be a good average, so over 200 attendees a year.**

**Future Vision is the assistive technology Zoom on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, where world leading speakers give updates on technologies, e.g. Navilens, Wayaround, Sight and Sound or the sight loss charities themselves might provide a workshop, our most recent one being from Sight Advice on Artificial Intelligence. Attendances range from 15 to 20 a session.**

**Any suggestions for either session are always welcomed.**

## **3. Book at Bedtime.**

**This weekly session is aimed at people without the internet and uses Together.ly phone technology. With your permission, we will add your phone number to the list, your phone then rings at 7.00pm on a Thursday and you just pick it up if you want to attend. No need for codes or using the internet. It is that easy!**

**The session includes a live story, read by one of our volunteers or staff members. The sessions last around 30 minutes with an option for a short chat at the beginning and end of the story.**

**Just call Sight Advice South Lakes on 01539 769055 and we can add you on to any of these sessions. Alternatively, just email, Tim on [tim@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:tim@sightadvice.org.uk)**

***What's On Spring 2024 For you to pull out and keep***

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

**Using Zoom**

Unless stated, just follow this link to access Sight Advice Zoom Meetings: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4580437872>

Alternatively, go to the Zoom website and use meeting ID 458 043 7872 for all events. To access Zoom, go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)

If you wish to join on the landline telephone, please dial 0203 481 5237 and when asked put in the Meeting ID 458 043 7872

You might also be asked to enter hash at the end of this number (bottom right button on 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 MeetUpCall**

People will be dialled in so please get in touch to be added to the meeting. Your phone will ring at the time of the session. Answer your phone and you will be asked to press 1 and you will then be in the session.

Alternatively, you can dial 0300 37 30965 from a landline and enter room code 172 272 76 just after the stated time of the event. 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.

**MARCH**

<b>Fri 1st</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Tues 5th</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 5th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 7th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book at Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 8th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Mon 11th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Vital Quiz – Netherfield Cricket Club</b>
<b>Tues 12th</b>	<b>1.30pm</b>	<b>AGM – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 14th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Windermere Community Group – Goodly Dale Centre, Windermere</b>
<b>Thurs 14th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 14th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 15th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Mon 18th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Arnside Community Group – Arnside Methodist Church</b>
<b>Mon 18th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Kendal Community Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Tues 19th</b>	<b>All Day</b>	<b>Low Vision Clinic – to register for an appointment please call 01539 769 055</b>
<b>Tues 19th</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 19th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Sedbergh Community Group – Sedbergh People’s Hall</b>
<b>Thurs 21st</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Thurs 21st</b>		<b>Free Will Clinic – Ambleside</b>
<b>Fri 22nd</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Tues 26th</b>		<b>Easter Hamper Draw takes place</b>
<b>Tues 26th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Games Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 28th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Future Vision Assistive Technology Workshop – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 28th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Community Group – Queen Elizabeth Court, Kirkby Lonsdale</b>
<b>Thurs 28th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 29th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>

**APRIL**

<b>Tues 2nd</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 2nd</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 4th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 5th</b>	<b>10am– 2pm</b>	<b>Future Vision Exhibition – Kendal Town Hall, FREE admission</b>
<b>Sat 6th</b>		<b>Street Collection – Kendal</b>
<b>Tues 9th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Games Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Wed 10th</b>		<b>Walking Group – Walk Grange Prom</b>
<b>Thurs 11th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 11th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Windermere Community Group – Goodly Dale Centre, Windermere</b>
<b>Thurs 11th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book at Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 12th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Mon 15th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Arnside Community Group – Arnside Methodist Church</b>
<b>Mon 15th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Kendal Community Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Tues 16th</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 16th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Sedbergh Community Group – Sedbergh People’s Hall</b>
<b>Thurs 18th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 19th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Sun 21st – Sun 28th</b>		<b>Online Spring Auction</b>
<b>Tues 23rd</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Games Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 25th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Future Vision Assistive Technology Workshop – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 25th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Community Group – Queen Elizabeth Court, Kirkby Lonsdale</b>
<b>Thurs 25th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 26th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>

**MAY**

<b>Thurs 2nd</b>		<b>Free Will Clinic – Windermere</b>
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## Sight Advice Magazine – Spring 2024

<b>Thurs 2nd</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 3rd</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Tues 7th</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 7th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Dual Sensory Loss Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Weds 8th</b>	<b>10am– 2.30pm</b>	<b>Optelec Low Vision Product Clinic – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Wed 8th</b>		<b>Walking Group – Walk Elterwater Round</b>
<b>Thurs 9th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Living Well: How to make the most of life with sight loss – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 9th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Windermere Community Group – Goodly Dale Centre, Windermere</b>
<b>Thurs 9th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 10th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Tues 14th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Games Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 16th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book at Bedtime – MeetupCall</b>
<b>Fri 17th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Mon 20th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Kendal Community Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Mon 20th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Arnside Community Group – Arnside Methodist Church</b>
<b>Tues 21st</b>	<b>10.15am</b>	<b>Craft Group – Castle St Community Centre</b>
<b>Tues 21st</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Sedbergh Community Group – Sedbergh People’s Hall</b>
<b>Thurs 23rd</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book at Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 19th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 25th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book At Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 24th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>
<b>Sat 25th</b>		<b>Street Collection – Arnside</b>
<b>Tues 28th</b>	<b>2pm</b>	<b>Games Group – The Bradbury Centre</b>
<b>Thurs 30th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Future Vision Assistive Technology Workshop – Zoom</b>
<b>Thurs 30th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Kirkby Lonsdale Community Group – Queen Elizabeth Court, Kirkby Lonsdale</b>
<b>Thurs 30th</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Book at Bedtime – MeetUpCall</b>
<b>Fri 31st</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Coffee Morning Quiz with Mr Quizoh – Zoom</b>

**Future Vision 2024**

**Annual Exhibition of Assistive Technology**

**Friday April 5<sup>th</sup>, Kendal Town Hall, 10.00am – 2.00pm**

**Light refreshments – FREE admission**

We at Sight Advice South Lakes are pleased to announce our annual exhibition of the world's top assistive technology for people with sight loss.

As we go to print, we have 16 exhibitors, including local and national charities, attending. This event is unmissable and the biggest of its kind in the area.



On display, will be electronic magnifiers, smart phones, artificial Intelligence display, audible gaming, braille machines, AI Headsets, talking clocks, talking newspapers, talking tablets, lighting, talking phones, video technology, the latest apps for phones and tablets, talking machines, screen readers and more!

The exhibition starts at 10.00am and finishes around 2.00pm. Entry is free, and, in the adjoining room, from 10.00am until 12pm, there will be light refreshments available. This event will allow you to have a hot drink, enjoy the stalls and talk to top sight loss professionals about your needs, alongside local charities, also in attendance.

For more information contact Tim on 01539 769055  
[tim@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:tim@sightadvice.org.uk)



**Children and Young People's Project**

**Alicia Makinson**

Our project has continued to have a busy and most enjoyable couple of months. Back in November, we returned to Kendal Snowsports Club to take part in Tubing. This has always been a popular activity. After pulling a plastic tube up the slope, individuals sit in and whizz down ready to go back up again! The amount of rain that day certainly made us go faster.



Huge thanks to Michael and Sam (volunteers) who helped us on the day.

Early January saw some of our members returning to Jump Rush, Morecambe for our delayed Christmas Trampolining Party. This was postponed in December due to heavy snowfall. It's wonderful to see our young people really developing their friendships at our events. To see the joy on their faces when their friends turn up means a lot.

And finally....we went to watch the Lakes Players' Pantomime (Sleeping Beauty) in late January. We had an amazing time... 'Oh yes we did!' Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the performance and again our thanks goes out to the cast who met our children beforehand to look at the props. Some of us even got to go behind the stage!



Welcome to our new members who have joined us in the recent months. As always, we are able to offer individual support to our families and opportunities through our fun activities and events. If you know of a family where there is a child/young person with a Visual Impairment do encourage them to get in touch, or with their permission pass on their details to us and I will get in touch. I would be very happy to talk to them about the project and chat

about how best we may be able to offer support. You can call the office on 01539 769055 or email me at [alicia@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:alicia@sightadvice.org.uk)

My colleagues Sarah Stoddard and Tim Ward are ECLO's at the Eye Clinic (Westmorland General Hospital). They tend to be there on Monday and Wednesday and would be more than happy to talk to you about our Children and Young People's Project, if you happen to be there on those days.

Upcoming events:

Independent Cooking Sessions

Outdoor activities (Land and Water-based) at an Outdoor Education Centre

For more information about our events, contact Alicia on 01539 769 055 or on [alicia@sightadvice.org.uk](mailto:alicia@sightadvice.org.uk)

## ***Fundraising Update***

***Aileen Ward***

I hope your 2024 has got off to a good start.

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to everyone who supported our fundraising events in December. Our Spirits of Christmas Hamper was won by Margaret Dodd, well done Margaret! Our 100 Club Bonus draw of £50 was won by Gwen Cropper and runner up, with £25, was Christine Bowness.



Thank you also to our friends at ASDA and Morrisons who welcomed us in store. Thank you to the volunteer collectors and the generous public for making these a success. We also want to thank all of the people including our business community, who supported this year's Winter Appeal and those who donated gifts to our Give a Gift appeal.

Finally, to Eileen who decorated our Sight Advice South Lakes Christmas Tree in the Christmas Tree Festival at Kendal Parish Church with a 'fishy' theme!

We raised well over £3000 for the charity in total over this period so, a huge thank you to everyone who supported and helped us in some way.

**Our Burns Celebration afternoon on 25<sup>th</sup> Jan was a super event, with live music from Jackie, readings and a hearty meal of haggis pie and cranachan washed down with a wee dram. We will definitely look to do something like this again.**

**What is Coming up?**

**Join in on our exciting Easter Draw, running from 28<sup>th</sup> February to the 26<sup>th</sup> March. First prize features a large, filled and decorated, Easter egg, and the second prize is another wonderful Easter Egg, both created and donated by Stuart, The Blind Chocolatier.**

**[www.theblindchocolatier.co.uk](http://www.theblindchocolatier.co.uk)**

**Tickets are available from Sight Advice, from Stuart at the Blind Chocolatier shop in Staveley and online via Trybooking (link will be on our Sight Advice South Lakes website) £2.50 per ticket.**

**April 5<sup>th</sup> sees our fundraising team supporting our annual Future Vision Exhibition at Kendal Town Hall from 10am.**

**May 21<sup>st</sup> is the start of our popular Spring Auction with a celebration of all things Springtime, this runs until 28<sup>th</sup> March. If you use Facebook, do have a look on our Fundraising Page, if not most of the items will be on display at the charity during the week of the auction. You can place a bid with the auction host, Aileen or on Facebook. Alternatively, we have a hard copy catalogue and audio description available too. Just contact us from 21<sup>st</sup> April onwards for help.**

**Street and Store Collections are restarting and subject to confirmation will be happening from March onwards in Kendal, Arnside and Ambleside. We will be sending out the volunteers' spring rota to collectors soon, please complete and return it to us with your availability.**

**Our Gifts, Wills and Legacy Sessions will continue monthly. Over the next few months, we will also be visiting Ambleside, Windermere and Bowness to promote our service.**

**If you are interested in finding out how leaving a gift in your will can change the lives of people who have sight loss, please get in touch with Aileen at the office.**

**Best wishes for spring everyone!**

**Aileen**

***Volunteer Coordinator***

***Rosalind Melville***

As I write this article, I have been in my new position as Volunteer Coordinator for a month. During this time, it has been a pleasure to meet volunteers and to see first-hand the work that they do; I have really enjoyed visiting groups and events and would like to say thank you to all volunteers for giving me such a warm welcome.



I am always struck by the very simple statement on the Sight Advice website – Sight loss is not life loss. The Sight Advice Facebook posts give an insight in to what Sight Advice and its volunteers do to ensure those with sight loss can be supported, continue to be part of the community and live a full life; whether it is tubing down ski slopes, cycling round the Manchester velodrome, getting to community support groups, games and quizzes or walking in the beautiful countryside, to name but a few things! All these events are made possible by dedicated volunteers, without whom we could not do much of what we do, so the role of a volunteer is a vital and valued one.

The events I have attended in my first month include a post-Christmas lunch with the Walking Group at the Hansen's Ice Cream Parlour, Arnside Community Group's cream tea outing at The Villa in Levens and spending a very pleasant morning with the Windermere Community Group run by Janice and supported that week by volunteers Neil and Christine at the Goodley Dale Health Centre. When visiting these groups, it is easy to see how important volunteering is and what a valuable job Sight Advice volunteers do.

I look forward to visiting the other community groups that run throughout the months (which take place in Arnside, Kendal, Sedbergh, Kirkby Lonsdale and Windermere). These friendly groups, all run by our amazing volunteers, offer entertainment, quizzes, games, guest speakers, support and refreshments. New people are always welcome and volunteer drivers can help with transport.

June 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> is National Volunteer Appreciation Week and so to mark the occasion and to say a big thank you to all the Sight Advice volunteers for your hard work, dedication and input we are hosting our own appreciation event on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June between

2.00pm – 4.00pm. Volunteers please do drop in and join us in celebrating all the work that you do.

In the meantime, I look forward to meeting more volunteers over the coming months and seeing more of the work that you do.

Enjoy the Spring.

Rosalind

***Concerns about your eyes or vision?***

***Tim Bagot***

A common question people ask is, “Where should I go with concerns about my 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 or pharmacy or you 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.

## ***Upcoming Changes to our Magazine***

***June 2024***

We are excited to share some news about our magazine. After careful consideration and with our commitment to keeping things fresh and engaging, we have decided to make some adjustments to how we bring our magazine to you.

Here is What's New:

Starting this June, we will be transitioning to a biannual publication schedule, producing two feature-packed issues a year. This change allows us to dive deeper into producing each edition with more enriching content, from community updates and insights from guest writers to our dependable, expert advice and information you have always valued. In addition, we are spicing things up with an engaging activity section in each issue — think quizzes, word searches, and crosswords to keep you entertained!

**Monthly "What's On" Updates:** To ensure you are always in the know, we're giving our "What's On" section its own spotlight. Instead of including it in the magazine, we will be releasing monthly updates that will contain all the latest events and happenings. Whether you prefer the convenience of email, picking up a hard copy from our office, or browsing online, we have got you covered. This way, we can keep you updated with the freshest, most relevant content all year round.

**Delivery:** We are moving towards digital delivery as our primary method, in line with many other charities. However, for those without email we can send the magazine to you on a memory stick or as a printed copy. If you have not already updated your preference, just let us know, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

## Why the Change?

We have been producing our magazine in its current format for some time now, but we feel it is time for a change. Not only does it help us manage the magazine's running costs more effectively, but it also gives us a fantastic opportunity to rejuvenate our content and how we connect with you, our readers.

## We Want to Hear From You!

As we embark on this new journey, your thoughts and ideas are important to us. Once you have experienced our new format in June, please reach out and share your feedback. We are keen to hear your thoughts.

Thank you for your continued support. We are looking forward to this new chapter together.

Thank you, Sara

## ***Low Vision Product Clinic***

**Low Vision Product Clinic**  
**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



**Would you like support with your sight or technology?**

**We are here to help you.**

**Gain hands-on experience with electronic magnifiers, reading machines, portable, and much more!**

**Optelec, in conjunction with Sight Advice South Lakes, will be holding a Product Clinic at our office here at –**

**The Bradbury Centre, 116 Highgate, Kendal, LA9 4HE.**

**on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May.**

**Time slots will be available between 10am and 2.30pm.**

**To book your slot call 0800 145 6115 or email [sarahk@optelec.co.uk](mailto:sarahk@optelec.co.uk)**



***Sight Advice South Lakes Team***

<p><b><i>Chief Executive</i></b> Claire Park</p> <p><b><i>Services Manager</i></b> Sara Cook</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Coordinator (Assistive Technology)</i></b> Tim Ward</p> <p><b><i>Community Development Officer</i></b> Judith Rogers</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Coordinator (Community Development)</i></b> Jackie Bateman</p> <p><b><i>Volunteer Coordinator</i></b> Rosalind Melville</p>	<p><b><i>Young People and Children’s Project Coordinator</i></b> Alicia Makinson</p> <p><b><i>Sight Support Advisors</i></b> Sarah Stoddard Krystyna Slosarska</p> <p><b><i>Eye Clinic Liaison Officers</i></b> Sarah Stoddard Tim Ward</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>
<p><b><i>Chair of Trustees</i></b> Dr Sal Riding</p> <p><b><i>Trustees</i></b> Mrs Linda Baverstock      Miss Rachel Ireland Miss Jenny Hodkinson      Mrs Janet McLeod Mr Paul Blackburn</p>	



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