



Newsletter

Autumn 2018



Vision Support at St. Asaph Cathedral
10th December 2018



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

A WORD FROM MIRIAM WRIGHT

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. Firstly I would like to mention Liz Williams who sadly died in May this year. Liz was a valued member of Vision Support, serving as a volunteer out in the community and on our Board of Trustees. She will be greatly missed. Last time I mentioned our community empowerment project and thought I would give you an update.

Over the last four months we have visited nine groups, talking to over ninety people with sight loss about issues which affect them and finding out their views on our current services.

Almost 50 individuals completed a survey and we are now in the process of organising Sight Loss Participation events in each county.

At these events you will be invited to lead discussions with representatives from local health authorities, councils, partner and other voluntary organisations about issues that matter to you.

From what you have told us already, topics are likely to include the continued lack of accessible transport, supporting community groups to become inclusive for people with sight loss, accessible information and communication, improving employment prospects and support for children and young people.

We are also inviting people with sight loss to become part of Vision Support's new Steering Group to represent the interests of people with sight loss across the region. If you would like to find out more please contact us at the Chester office.

In addition to our Christmas celebrations we have two important occasions coming up this autumn, the opening of our new Sensory Services centre in Widnes and as usual our AGM. We will be publicising these events separately so please look out for the information and I will look forward to seeing many of you at all our events over the next few months.

PATTERNS OF TACTILITY AND SOUND EXHIBITION

Vision Support and Macclesfield Eye Society partnered with the University of Huddersfield to launch a Kinetic Drawing Exhibition in September, which was held at the Macclesfield Silk Museum.

The exhibition showcased the work of local people with a vision impairment who have been involved in a project to interpret sounds from the machines of the Paradise Mill into pictures.

Many of the pictures have tactile representations, which can be handled.



PUBLIC HEALTH WALES

We are working with Public Health Wales in order to improve services for people with sight loss. As part of their latest project we have been invited to advise on the accessibility of the bowel screening test kit. A similar project was launched in England about two years ago.

We are now at the stage where Public Health Wales will introduce the new improved test kit i.e. the packaging and accessible information to focus groups. Our social group in Conwy will run a feedback session for their members in October. We are very pleased to be involved with this invaluable work.

Prior to this project we were involved with improving the Breast Screening service for vision impaired people at centres in Wrexham and Llandudno, and also with their printed information and publications in different formats. Other screening projects will follow and we will report on these in future newsletters.



This year Vision Support and North Wales Society for the Blind have been chosen as St Asaph Cathedral's Charities of the Year!

Join us for:-



**A
CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATION
ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL
MONDAY 10TH
DECEMBER 2018
11.00 A.M. - 3.00 P.M.**

Listen to Christmas songs by the Prestatyn Tre-Foel Singers

Visit our mini Christmas market, enjoy refreshments in the Cathedral's new tea rooms and take part in our Christmas raffle and Tombola.

Entrance is free and return coaches are available.

St Asaph Rotary Club are also supporting our celebration and providing additional transport.

If you would like to attend and you require transport, please contact Vision Support on 01244 381515

HALTON VOLUNTEERS

On Tuesday 11th September we welcomed 10 of our Halton Volunteers to The Ten Lock Flight in Runcorn for a thank you meal from Vision Support for all their hard work and support through the year.



The meal was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, ending with volunteers being presented with a gift wrapped cup cake by Miriam Wright. We thank all our volunteers for generously giving up their time to support Vision Support.

ABERGELE EYE HOSPITAL

Vision Support will be holding an awareness stand at Abergele Eye Hospital on Thursday the 18th of October and Thursday the 6th of December, where we will have information on groups, events and services in your area. Please pop along for a chat if you are nearby.

LOW VISION FOCUS DAY

Enhanced Vision and Optelec, now trading as VFO, are hosting a Tech Focus Day on Thursday 8th November 10—2pm at the Bluecoat Vision Centre, Upper Northgate Street, Chester, CH1 4EE.

Come and visit VFO for a demonstration on the latest electronic magnifiers and specialist text-to-speech devices.

HELP HEMINGWAY!



Hemingway the dog took part in Chester Business Club's annual charity walk in September to raise money for people with sight loss.

He walked nearly 7 miles with his friends and said "I really enjoyed myself, but they seem to have forgotten my bacon butty in Eccleston!".



It's not too late to add to Hemingway's sponsorship total, you can make a donation via our website or by contacting our head office on 01244 381515.

LLANGOLLEN TOWN CENTRE

The VI team in Denbighshire have been asked to advise on the redevelopment of Llangollen Town Centre. This will include advising on types of crossings and locations as well as shared spaces. We will be having talks with the local councils and consultation teams over the next few months. We have also been consulted about remodeling the waste collection service in Denbighshire for people with sight loss and other disabilities.

OPEN LINE—01244 478910

Remember our Open Line service is available Monday to Thursday 10am to 2pm. If you need any information on our services or would like to drop into The Bluecoat to look at the resources we have available, our volunteers would be happy to speak to you either in person or on 01244 478910.

BRaille TRAINING—CHESTER

Vision support provide Braille training sessions at the Bluecoat Vision Centre in Chester, this is usually one-to-one training and at a pace that suits you.

To book a session or if you have any questions please call Keith at the Bluecoat on 01244 341885.

BRaille TRAINING—HALTON

If you live in Halton and you would like to learn Braille then please come along to the Halton Independent Living Centre, Collier Street, Runcorn.

Groups run Thursday mornings from 10:00am till 12:00noon

For more information please contact the Halton Centre on 01928 582946.

VI VOLUNTEER MENTORING PROJECT

We are pleased to announce that our “VI Volunteer Mentoring Project”, which aims to support people over the age of 25 who are long-term unemployed with building the skills and confidence needed for volunteering or further learning, will be expanding to cover Flintshire and Wrexham.

The project, which has been ongoing in Conwy and Denbighshire since March 2018, also supports people of retirement age who are hoping to volunteer and/or become more active within their communities. We are delivering this project in partnership with Wales Council for Voluntary Action. It is being funded by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO).

For more information, please telephone our Prestatyn Sight Loss Centre at 01745 472558, or email kbenn@visionsupport.org.uk

GWYNT Y MÔR COMMUNITY FUND



Vision Support is pleased to announce it has been awarded three years of funding by Gwynt Y Môr. This will help improve services and support local communities to be more inclusive for people with sight loss.

We will be delivering in partnership 'Living With Sight Loss' courses and continuing our Active Inclusion Mentored Volunteer project, supporting individuals to volunteer, access training and gain future employment. The funding will allow us to

more effectively support campaigning and peer support groups, empowering individuals to lead the development of services. We will also become more connected with local communities, increasing our community outreach by providing short Vision Impairment awareness sessions to other organisations, retailers and employers, and delivering talks and support to groups, so people with sight loss can participate more fully in a wider range of activities. Miriam Wright, Chief Executive of Vision Support said "We are very grateful to the Gwynt Y Môr Community Fund which will help support people with sight loss to have a voice and get more involved in their local communities". If you or anyone you know, would like to get involved by volunteering for Vision Support, please contact us on 01244 381515.

Neil Pringle, Gwynt y Môr's Grants Manager was fully supportive of the initiative stating " This project clearly reflects the ethos of the GYM programme. The fund is focused on improving our coastal communities by building strong and sustainable communities, encouraging training, employment and economic growth and most importantly reducing poverty and inequality. This project addresses each of these priorities. We wish Vision Support every success in the delivery of this innovative project".

SIGHT LOSS FORUMS IN CHESHIRE

Macclesfield – First Wednesday of every month 1.30pm
Macclesfield Eye Society, 15 Queen Victoria St, Macclesfield, SK11 6LP

Current Issues being discussed:

Working with Cheshire East council towards a leisure cinema scheme.

Congleton Forum – Last Wednesday of every other month, 10.00 – 12.00, Venue varies.

Chester Forum – First Thursday of every month 11.00 – 1.00pm, Bluecoats office.

Nantwich Club

The Nantwich Club has recently said goodbye to their valued volunteer Gill Wilson, who has recently passed away. Gill started this group with the help of other volunteers back in 1994 to support people with a vision impairment, hence this was originally known as the 'Blind Club' and more recently known to us as the 'Nantwich Social Group'. Gill was very supportive in the running of the group and will be sorely missed by both volunteers and members.

The group has always had a good attendance with an average of fifteen members, who all meet for a coffee on a Thursday morning.

Vision Support would also like to thank Angela, Wendy, Ann, Beryl and all the other volunteers who have supported this group and made it a success.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE—RUNCORN

Vision Support are holding a Christmas Carol Service on Tuesday 11th December at Holy Trinity Church Runcorn 11am, the carols are being sung by local school children from Runcorn. There will be tea/coffee and mince pies after the service.

SOCIAL GROUPS IN CHESHIRE

Tuesday Club – Meets alternate Tuesday mornings 10.30 - 12.30pm at Head Office, Chester. Call 01244 381515 for more information.

Halton Activities Group – Meets Tuesday mornings 11.00 - 1.00pm at The Mencap Centre, The Laburnum Grove, Runcorn. Call 01928 582946 for more information.

Northwich Society for the Blind – Meets first Wednesday each month 2.00 - 4.00pm at Castle Community Centre on Barbers Lane.

Hazlemere Group – Meets first Friday each month 10.30 - 12.30pm at Hazlemere Extra Care Development, Hambleton Way.

Nantwich Group – Meets every Thursday 10.30 - 12.30pm at The Alms Houses, Beam Street, Nantwich.

Crown Green Bowlers – Meets every Thursday 11.00 - 1.00pm at St Werburgh's Parish Centre, Brook Street, Chester, CH1 3DZ. Sighted Volunteers required and no experience necessary.

Sandbach Group - Meets every Monday at Oakdene Court, Belle Vue Terrace, Sandbach, 10 am to 12 noon.

Audio Described Cinema Group – Monthly screening at The StoryHouse in Chester, 10.00 – 12.00, exact date varies.

SOCIAL & CAMPAIGNING GROUPS IN NORTH WALES

Rhyl Visionaires – Meets on the last Monday of every month 11.00 – 12.30 p.m. at Rhyl Library.

Prestatyn Visionaires – Meets on the first Wednesday of each month. 10.00 – 12.00 noon. Nant Hall Church, Prestatyn.

Wrexham Visionaires – Meets on the first Thursday of each month. 11.00 – 1.00 p.m. at AVOW, Wrexham.

Conwy Sight Loss Group – Meets on the first Thursday of each month 11.00 – 1.00 p.m. The Grand Hotel, Happy Valley Rd, Llandudno. (Access through the Main Entrance)

Mold Visionaires – Meets on the third Wednesday of each month 2.00 – 4.00 p.m. Llys Jasmine, Mold.

VI Voices Denbighshire – Meets on the 2nd Monday every other month 2.00 – 4.00 p.m. Prestatyn Library. Call 01745 472558 for details.

VI Voices Wrexham – Meets on the third Monday every other month 2.00 – 4.00 p.m AVOW. Please call 01745 472558 for details.

Socialise (18 to 55) – Meets first Saturday of the month 1.00 - 4.00pm. Please contact 01244 381515 for venue information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Chester Head Office

Units 1 & 2 The Ropeworks
Whipcord Lane, Chester, CH1 4DZ
01244 381515

Halton Resource Centre

Independent Living Centre
Collier Street, Runcorn, WA7 1HB
01928 582946

Prestatyn Sight Loss Centre

38 High Street, Prestatyn, LL19 9BB
01745 472558
Monday—Thursday
10:00am-3:00pm

Wrexham Resource Centre

AVOW Ty, 21 Egerton Street
Wrexham, LL11 1ND
01978 318813

Bluecoat Vision Centre

Upper Northgate Street
Chester, CH1 4EE
01244 341885
Monday—Wednesday
10:00am-3:00pm

Vision Support Open Line

01244 478910

information@visionsupport.org.uk

www.visionsupport.org.uk

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