

VIEWPOINT

NEWSLETTER



Sept – Nov 2019

Autumn Edition

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Welcome to the autumn edition of our Viewpoint!



Sometimes I'm allowed to venture out of the office and get involved with the many projects we have running at the Vision Support Centre. The photo shows Paul Laing and myself enjoying a few moments getting used to our brand new tandem bikes that are available for visually impaired people. Great fun!

Our new Eye Clinic Liaison Officer is settling in at Furness General Hospital and as ever the Vision Support Team is busy supporting people in our community. Also on the news front, at Ostley House the Bradbury Village is nearing completion and the Day Care Service is proving popular. It's really busy at the moment but thanks to our staff and volunteers who make it all happen.

Carl Hodge

ACTIVITIES

The activities project has now undertaken a variety of activities which have included indoor skydiving, yoga, walking with alpacas, sailing, tandem cycling, kayaking and paddle-boarding. The tandem cycling has become a huge success with 2 clients entered into the Tour De Furness which was held on Sunday 8th September, we have been informed this is the first time a tandem has been entered and we also have the first visually impaired individuals ever entered into the Tour De Furness. This is fantastic news as it highlights how we can work together to overcome a variety of barriers, which will lead to us being able to enter more events like the Tour De Furness while also being able to offer a wider range of activities.

Furthermore, a number of clients went kayaking at Duddon Canoe Club in July; the club members made the clients feel very welcome and by the end of the session invited us to join in with the club members on a Friday night. Since then some of the clients have become full members at Duddon Canoe Club, who have continued to ensure the clients feel included and have adapted some of the equipment to ensure independence whilst undertaking this sport. Recently the club invited us to enter the Hasler Marathon Race which is being held at Borwick Hall, Lancaster Canal on the 22nd September. We are pleased to announce that we have a 2-man team entered into the race which is a first for this event. As a number of clients now attend Duddon Canoe Club on a Friday night 6-8pm we have a member of staff and club members that are available to help anyone wanting to come along and try kayaking. If you wish to try this sport then please contact

Claire Huddleston at the office on (01229) 440556 who will then give you more details and inform the club.

A number have clients have registered an interest in horse riding, we are pleased to announced Seaview riding school have agreed to work with us to enable clients to be able undertake this activity. Seaview can offer 2 places at a time which we are hoping will be on a weekly basis, at the present time this will be on a Friday morning. Due to the number of clients wishing to partake in this activity a rota system will be drawn up to ensure everyone is offered a place.

Future activities are being explored at the present time, if anyone would like to try a certain activity then please let us know and we will do our best to arrange it, in addition plans are being made to put a suggestions box in the shop so people can drop ideas into it. Anyone interested in tandem cycling then please contact Claire Huddleston at the office (01229) 440556 who will organise a lead rider and help plan a route to undertake. We are still appealing for lead riders for the tandems anyone interested will be required to undertake a First Aid course through the Society and register as a volunteer.

CALENDARS AND DIARIES

We now have calendars and diaries available for 2020. The diaries are available in both portrait and landscape formats.

Diaries - £5.95

Calendars – Portrait - £6.95 - Landscape - £7.95

MORE WORDS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Every year we have to raise around £1.3 million pounds to enable us to continue to support 800 visually impaired people in our area. This is done by a variety of means but we are always grateful for any legacies or donations people leave to us. The legacies people leave in their wills can make such a difference to us. All are gratefully received and are used to support our work. Likewise all donations go towards meeting the annual target.

We are trying different fundraising methods at the moment. Paul Ogden has really worked well with the team of street collectors and together they are contributing to the success of the charity. Thian Brodie is developing new ideas for us and the last 4 Mounds Walk proved successful. And finally, Kath Threlkeld is writing many grant applications and has already secured funding for projects such as the Activity Project.

The amounts raised by the fundraising team are used in many areas such as:

- £74.55 cost of a 2 hour visit to Coniston
- £1200.00 cost for 4 editions of our Newsletter
- £600 yearly cost for the CDs for the Talking Newspapers
- £126.00 per Stepping Forwards course at the Vision Support Centre

If you would like to help us achieve our fundraising challenge then please give us ONE hour of your time each year. Please contact the VSC on 01229 440556 to find out more of what you can do to help us.

Thank you. Carl Hodge

CHILDRENS PROJECT

Trip To Gulliver's World, Warrington – May 2019

On Thursday 30th May 2019, the Younger Generations went on a trip to Gulliver's World in Warrington.

Gulliver's is a family run theme park, specially designed for families with children between 2 and 13 years of age. It has over 80 rides and attractions, with a good mix of rides and play areas to suit children of all ages.

When we arrived at the park, our families went their own separate ways to enjoy the day and we arranged to meet up at the end of the day, so we could all walk to the coach together. Whilst I went round the park with one family, we bumped into a few others from our group on some of the rides. Everyone was having a fabulous time. They tried out rides such as 'The Wiggler', a small caterpillar rollercoaster for children and the log flume. The families also enjoyed the dodgems, carousels, a fire engine ride where the children could squirt a picture of a flame with water and an aeroplane ride, which went round in a circle, but the children could also make it rise upwards and move downwards. There were swing boats and swing rides and lots of little rides on tracks. The children went on the giant water slide and could also look at the dinosaurs and attractions in the prehistoric themed 'Lost World'. There were lots of other rides and playground type play areas which the children enjoyed too.

At the end of the afternoon, we met up at the main entrance and headed back to the coach together. We all had a fabulous day.

Trip to Rheged and Lowther Castle, Penrith – August 2019

On Thursday 8th August 2019, our younger members and their families went on a trip to Rheged and Lowther Castle in Penrith.

At Rheged, we visited the interactive Brick Science Lego Lab exhibition. The exhibition was full of fun Lego activities for the children to have a go at. They could build towers from giant Lego blocks and look at some fantastic models including a crocodile's head, the Empire State building and an amazing moving funfair.

The children played with a Lego xylophone and a Lego version of battleships. They really enjoyed building vehicles and then rolling them down different shaped ramps. They could also make a vehicle with a sail on it which when placed on a track could be powered down the track using a fan. Some of our children enjoyed just generally building things with Lego and making pictures using Lego bricks. There was one activity where the children could build a tower on a base which vibrated. They carried on building the tower until the vibrations made the tower collapse, it was great fun! Once we had enjoyed all the activities in the exhibition, we headed outside for a picnic and the children played in the adventure playground.

After lunch we headed over to Lowther Castle on the coach. At Lowther Castle we were greeted by a member of staff who gave all the children a sticker and a map of a nature trail. She explained that if we saw any of the rare species marked on the map the children could claim a

small prize if they could let the staff on reception know the name of the rare species.

With our maps in hand we walked to the Lost Castle, which is a giant wooden fort themed adventure playground. The children really enjoyed running around together, playing different chase games and using the various play areas. It was so nice to see them all making friends with each other and just generally having loads of fun.

On the way back from the lost castle, the children were looking for the rare species boards indicated on the map. We found two of them and when we got back to the main building, a couple of children went to claim their prize, which was a re-cycled pencil. The children then enjoyed an ice cream before we got back on the coach and drove home.



Trip to Chester Zoo - August 2019

On Thursday 30th August 2019, our younger members and their families went on a trip to Chester Zoo. We set off a bit earlier than usual to give us plenty of time to look round the Zoo. When we got to Chester Zoo our families were happy to make their own way around. Before we split off in different directions, I made our families aware of who the Volunteers were on the trip and said to phone me if they needed any help.

We all then made our way round the Zoo and there was so much to see and do. The outdoor animatronic dinosaur exhibition was fabulous. The dinosaur models moved, had sound and some even squirted water out, which the children loved! Chester Zoo is huge, with over 70 animals and a number of attractions and places to eat, drink or have a picnic.

There were so many animals to see, such as lions, tigers, elephants, giraffes, zebras, black rhinos, black bears, komodo dragons and the South African painted dogs. The gibbons and orangutans were in the Red Ape House, as were some of the snakes and reptiles. The Aquarium was fabulous with lots of different types of sea life to look at. We were even lucky enough to see a sea urchin's face. One of the highlights of the day though was seeing the penguins being fed. The keepers threw in fish for the penguins and from out of nowhere dozens of seagulls flew in, trying to grab the fish! As the fish fell into the water we could see the penguins through the glass tank, swimming below the surface and catching the fish in their beaks.

There were other attractions at the Zoo too. Some of our children had their faces painted to look like a butterfly or a tiger. There was a monorail going through the centre of the Zoo that could be used to see some of the animals and there was a boat trip round 'The Islands' which was an area of the Zoo where the walkways were surrounded by water, it was stunning. On the way out we had a quick stop at the gift shop before getting back on the coach. The children were brilliant on the long trip home and we didn't get back until quite late. They chatted with each other and it was lovely to see them waving to each other as they got off the coach at various drop off points.

Everyone said what a good day they had had. It was a pleasure and a privilege to be a part of such a fabulous day with our younger members and their families and I would like to thank our staff members and the children who volunteered on the day, giving up their own time to ensure everyone had a great day out.



Thank you.

**Cath Rogerson
Children and Young Persons Co-ordinator**

VISION SUPPORT TEAM

We had our annual trip to Ryecroft Hall in July and as usual it was enjoyed by all. It isn't easy organising an event like this but, as usual, Emillie did a great job. Unless there are any other suggestions for next year, we will probably go there again.

Claire and Tracy have organised some great activities so far. These include walking with Alpacas, Kayaking and doing ifly in Manchester. We now have two tandem bikes and also some volunteer riders, so this will be one of the next activities. Some of our more adventurous clients will be taking part in a parachute jump soon, but for those who are perhaps wanting a more chilled out activity, there will be Alpaca Yoga. I am not quite sure how this works but it does sound interesting.

We held a coffee morning at Ulverston on 25th July. I took along some aids and equipment to demonstrate for anybody who finds it difficult to visit the Vision Support Centre in Cavendish Street. Paul Laing was also available to demonstrate the Alexa and In Your Pocket. We hope to do a similar event in Coniston and Millom next year.

We will be starting Kitchen Skills 18th September so if anyone is interested please get in touch. The instructor, Jane, will be demonstrating the various pieces of equipment including the talking microwave, talking weighing scales and advising on the benefits of contrast and good lighting when cooking or baking. She will discuss with everyone what they would like to do in future sessions which will be held monthly.

The Guide Dog party was held on 16th August. This was an event dreamed up by Claire Huddleston but it really

created some interest. Pictures of the dogs were put on Facebook and over two hundred people voted for their favourite. The winner was Mo but they are all winners. They all enjoyed a game of pass the parcel, and Claire Smith's two daughters made a cake especially for dogs. It was very chaotic but enjoyed by all. The dogs all went home with doggie bags!

It is National Eye Health Week 23rd – 29th September. We hope to put on several events to demonstrate the importance of regular eye tests and healthy eating. We will be holding a coffee afternoon on 24th September so please come along.

In September, the Vision Support Officers will be taking part in a course designed to demonstrate eccentric viewing. Eccentric viewing is a technique which enables anyone with central vision loss to maximise their vision. Eccentric viewing will not improve the condition of the retina but people generally feel that their vision has improved as a result of learning this technique. Once we have all mastered it we hope to be able to demonstrate it to anyone who is interested.

Maggie Nelson



SIGHT LOSS AWARENESS TRAINING

We offer awareness training to companies or organisations that wish to provide an excellent service to all customers. If anyone is interested in this service, please contact us on 01229 440556 for more details.

TECHNOLOGY SESSIONS

Here at the Vision Support Centre our Technology Sessions take place on the second Wednesday of every month 1.00pm – 4.00pm.

Everyone is welcome.

STEPPING FORWARD

If you have recently experienced sight loss, this short course could be of assistance to you. For four sessions we will describe the variety of services and products available for visually impaired people. Please get in touch if you are interested in taking part.

FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY

The Society relies on a variety of incomes to keep providing services in our local area for visually impaired people and one way is through the Friends of the Society. By paying direct or setting up a standing order with your bank to pay the Society £2, £5, £10, £20 or any other amount, you can make a real difference to our work. And if we can, we'll increase your donation through Gift Aid at no extra cost to yourself.

So if you would like to become a Friend please pick up a leaflet or give us a call and we will sort it out.

Thank you.

REMEMBERING US IN YOUR WILL

“The Society was there for me when I needed it the most. I want it to be there for others”. Client

Sight loss can be frightening and isolating, the simplest tasks, such as finding your way around the kitchen can be daunting. Lifelong hobbies, reading, baking, looking at old photographs, seem impossible and stepping outside suddenly becomes overwhelming.

With the right support, people can adapt, maintain independence and live life to the full. A gift in your will ensures that this support will be there for generations to come. Please consider leaving a gift for Barrow & Districts Society for the Blind in your Will. Future generations will appreciate it.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPARE TIME?

Here at the Society we have many volunteering opportunities, such as volunteer drivers, collectors, administration, tele-befriending to name but a few.

Any time that you can spare would be greatly appreciated.

If you are or know anybody that would be interested in helping us make a real difference to the lives of local visually impaired people. Please contact Elaine Rollinson on 01229 440556 who can give you more details about what opportunities we can offer.

GROUPS AND CLUBS

Monday Group – Social – Every Monday night 7.00 pm – 9.00 pm at Spring Mount, Walney.

Tuesday Group – Craft work – Every Tuesday 2.00pm – 3.30pm.

Thursday Group – Bingo – Every Thursday - 2.00pm. – 4.00pm at Station View, Barrow.

Ulverston Group – Social – meets every third Wednesday at 1.30pm – 3.30pm - Neville Street Methodist Church,

Barrow Luncheon Group – Last Wednesday of every month, assorted venues.

Dual Sensory Loss Support Group – Meets the third Monday of the month - 1.30pm – 3.00pm at the Vision Support Centre.

Millom Group – Social – every Friday 1.00.p.m – 3.00pm at the Salvation Army Citadel, Nelson Street, Millom .

Grange Group – Social – First Wednesday of every month 2.00pm – 4.00pm at the Thornleigh Hotel, The Esplanade, Grange over Sands..

Men’s Group – Social – first Wednesday of every month 1.30pm – 3.30pm at the Vision Support Centre.

Knit & Natter – Social – Every Tuesday at 10.00am – 11.00 am. A chance to enjoy some knitting while having a chat at the Vision Support Centre.

POETRY CORNER

True Love

There can be no deceitful nature and never is there any lies
To see true love, you only have to look in their devoted
eyes

You are special to them as they have chosen you to show
How much they care for you and will always let you know

An excited swish of the tail greets you when returning from
a busy day

They show how much they have missed you while you
have been away

Always following at your side to show how much they
really truly care

There is no need to ask for this love, for they're willing to
always share

They guide us with care through our darkest days and
keep us safe

In these well-trained special dogs, we receive lots of love
and faith

They will take us on the pathways that we cannot see for
ourselves

Their skill in learning is always there to find, when their
trainer delves

In terrible wars they have been with the soldiers in every
bloody fight

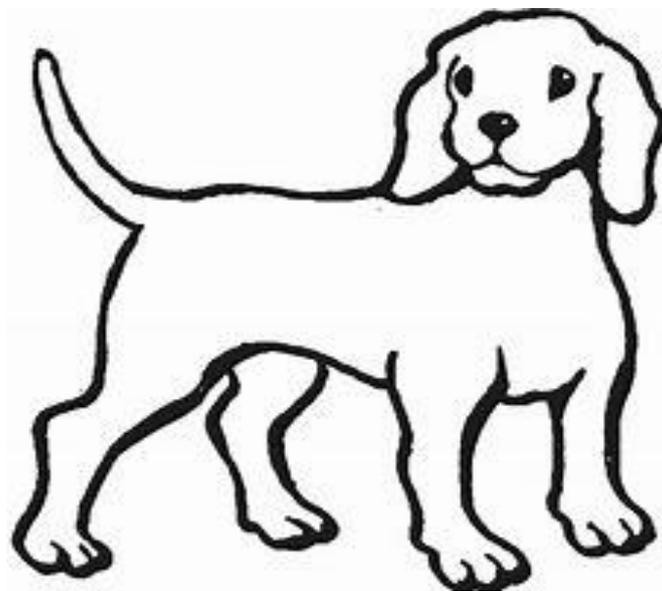
Always ready to carry out their duty and defend with all
their might

Man's best friend we call them but we give them softer
chosen names

They are members of our household and join in family fun
and games

**It is very sad when it's time for them to leave us and depart
We know their life is short but it always will break our heart
However, we are lucky people, to have had them in our
little world
Our dogs that lay upon our beds and snuggled where they
curled.**

By John Sullivan



**This poem was written by John Sullivan one of our clients
and a volunteer.**

**If you would like to send us poem that you would like us to
publish in our newsletter, please email Elaine Rollinson at
info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk or alternatively send a
hard copy to the address on the back of this newsletter.**

INFORMATION DESK

Police (non-emergency)	101
Furness General	01229 870870
Westmorland General	01539732288
NHS &GP (out of hours)	111
Water Emergency	0345 672 3723
Electrical Emergency	105
Gas Emergency	0800 111 999
Flood line	0345 988 1188
Highways Hotline	0300 303 2992
Cumbria County Council	01228 606060
Barrow County Council	01229 876543
South Lakeland Council	01539 733333
Copeland County Council	01946 598300
John Woodcock MP	01229 431204
Tim Farron MP	01539 723403
Citizens Advice Barrow	0344 488 9624
Citizens Advice Kendal	0344 411 1444
Samaritans	116 123

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Proud to support
**Barrow & Districts Society
for the Blind.**

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**BARROW BLIND SOCIETY WOULD LIKE TO THANK
BOTH OF THE ABOVE ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR
VALUED SUPPORT.**



BARROW & DISTRICTS SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

Vision Support Centre

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01229 440556

info@barrowblindsociety.org.uk

Company Number: 3133015

Charity Number: 1051674