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Outwood
Wakefield WF1 2PN
Tel: 01924 215555
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Hello everyone and welcome to our Autumn newsletter!

I hope you have enjoyed a lovely summer. Thank you to everyone who has joined us at our events and on trips – we have enjoyed seeing so many of you over the past few months!

It's really important to us that we are providing the best service possible to our members. To help us determine what we have been doing well and how we can improve our service to you, we have enclosed a short customer care survey and would be really grateful if you could find a few moments to complete it. If you would prefer to complete this survey electronically, please drop me an email at ceo@wdsa.org.uk. If you receive this newsletter in audio format, please call the office on 01924 215555 to complete the survey with a member of the team over the phone. We value your feedback and thank you so much for your time.

I'm also pleased to enclose a book of raffle tickets for our ever-popular Christmas Draw! Tickets are 50p each and as usual there will be fabulous prizes including Christmas hampers and tickets to local attractions. If you know any businesses that might like to donate a prize, please let us know or feel free to approach them directly. We have more tickets available should you need any for friends and family. We have enclosed a reply-paid envelope for your ticket counterfoils, payment and completed survey.

As always, thank you for supporting us.

Hayley Grocock, Chief Executive Officer

Wakefield District Sight Aid – charity news

Tech Mate: a digital inclusion skills and assistive technology project

The internet and technology are transforming the way we live our lives and have enormous potential to help people with sight loss with how they shop, keep in touch, access information and entertainment, and more.

Feedback from our members shows that they'd like to get online or explore options to digital technology in a way that would help them feel more connected to their families and the wider world, but feel confused by the options and lack the skills and confidence to do so.

We are pleased to announce the launch of **Tech Mate**, a new service designed to help our members with technology, regardless of their current level of knowledge. Our Tech Mate Project Leader, Neil Newton, is sight impaired himself and is here to support you if you don't know where to begin, have a specific problem or query, or simply want to try something new on your mobile phone or tablet computer.

Neil's normal working days will be Wednesdays and Thursdays. He is running a drop-in service from our Outwood office on Thursdays between 10am and 12.30pm. Just turn up, or you can make an appointment by calling 01924 215555 or emailing techmate@wdsa.org.uk. Neil is also able to visit you at home and provide technical advice and support over the phone. Please get in touch to find out more.

Update from Jo Brook, our Community Coordinator:

Events and trips

Well, what a summer we've had! Our Demo Day in June was ready with wrap-around anti-glare sunglasses in time for our heatwave trip to Winthrop Gardens, which was generally agreed to be "a completely lovely day". Anna and her team of welcoming volunteers looked after us in a very efficient and friendly way throughout the day. We had an inspiring and informative tour of the beautiful gardens and enjoyed a special vintage-style afternoon tea of tasty nibbles, cakes and sandwiches.

At the time of writing, we are about to take some of our members to Roundhay Park in Leeds for a traditional brass band afternoon, and on a visit to Rodley Nature Reserve followed by a local pub lunch. We will report back on these events in the next newsletter!

Some of our adventurous members have been enjoying some tandem cycling evenings around the back lanes and country parks of Wakefield district. These have been arranged by Ella Dixon, the project officer for Wild About Wakefield, which is part of Open Country – a charity with over 25 years' experience in successfully organising and leading countryside activities for people with disabilities. Beginners are welcome and the front riders are specially trained so why not try something new?

They also run a weekly Thursday Walking Group and an Outings group that goes out one weekend a month and enjoys easy access walks at places like National Trust properties, the seaside, and carries out nature studies. Adventure sports such as archery and abseiling are also available at weekends, with trained volunteers to guide. Contact Ella for more information on 01423 507227 or wakefield@opencountry.org.uk.

See the “dates for your diary” section for news of our forthcoming events!

Friends on the phone

This is our self-running service to help members connect with each other. If you would like to join a small friendship group of 3 or 4 people, where each person agrees to share phone numbers and contact each other regularly, we can link you in. Each person is a visually impaired member of our network. You will need to complete a written consent form which we will provide, and you can opt out at any time by letting the office know.

We are here to support you in establishing these new friendship groups so if you have any questions about this service, please get in touch. Members who have been using this service have said, “It’s been lovely to find new friends,” and “It’s going well. We plan to meet up sometime.”

Update from Nic Ford, our Sight Loss Advisor:

The last few months have been exceptionally busy and we have carried out a record number of home visits. It is amazing to know we are reaching out to help more people across the Wakefield district than ever before!

Please can I remind you that regular yearly eye examinations are really important, and a hospital appointment is no substitute for this. If you are registered as Sight Impaired, Severely Sight Impaired, over 60, diabetic,

have a family history of glaucoma or are in receipt of benefits, then the eye examination is free of charge. If you are housebound and are unable to get out to visit your optician, then there are some opticians that will visit you in your home, including Specsavers. Please contact the office if you would like more details.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming Demo Day in October, where we will be welcoming several visitors including Healthwatch, West Yorkshire Trading Standards, RNIB, and OrCam (specialist providers of pioneering artificial vision technology – leaflets available from the office upon request).

Supporter news

Huge thanks to:

- Our local Spar on Potovens Lane in Outwood, who donated a £30 voucher to us for us to buy supplies for our coffee mornings.
- Wakefield Over Fifties Action Group, for their donation of £50.
- Nick Nagle and Joe McKee, who responded to a post on social media asking for donations of USB sticks for sending out our audio newsletters. We received 120 sticks in total, which is amazing!

Summer flight-themed quiz (with thanks to Jack and Pam Reynolds)

1. In Greek mythology, who fell to his death when he flew too near to the sun?
2. Who invented the hot air balloon?
3. Name the Yorkshireman who is considered to be the father of flight.
4. What was the day job of the Wright Brothers?
5. Which British newspaper sponsored early flight in Britain by putting up prize money?
6. How did the weather help Louis Bleriot during the first cross channel flight in 1909?
7. In 1919 Alcock and Brown flew non-stop across the Atlantic – from where to where?
8. Name Charles Lindbergh's plane in which he made the first solo crossing of the Atlantic in 1927.
9. Who replaced Guy Gibson as the leader of the Dambusters?
10. Where is the headquarters of Boeing?

The answers are at the end of the newsletter!

Dates for your diary

Artwalk Wakefield – Wednesday 26th September 6pm – 7.30pm

We are pleased to announce that we've been working with our friends at The Art House, Wakefield, to offer a guided tour of the next Artwalk. For ten years, venues across Wakefield have been opening their doors for a bi-monthly evening Artwalk of visual arts, crafts, workshops, live music, and performances. This is the first time we have worked together to offer an accessible Artwalk for visually impaired people, and we are very excited about our new partnership!

We will gather at The Art House from 6pm for a welcome drink and an introduction to their current show, the 20:20 Print Exchange Touring Exhibition (<http://www.the-arthouse.org.uk/event/219/2020-print-exchange-touring-exhibition>), from their programme team. We will then move on to a couple of other venues close by, to be announced nearer the time. Walking time between venues will be limited to around 5 minutes, and the venues chosen will be as accessible as possible. We anticipate that the tour itself will last around an hour and a half, and people are welcome to continue to socialise together afterwards.

One of The Art House team will guide the tour and we will have staff and volunteers on hand to audio describe the work and help guide people. The event is free, but please register for the tour by visiting this link http://bit.ly/artwalk_guided_tour or calling 01924 312000. Do contact us in the office if you have any questions or have any trouble booking your place.

Younger Members Focus Group – we will be holding an informal focus group on **Monday 8th October** from 11am until 1pm in central Wakefield (venue TBC). The idea of the group is to give our working-age members the opportunity to tell us more about how we could enhance our services and support you better. Please contact the office to register your interest. We are looking at running a similar event outside of normal working hours if demand exists, so if you are working or have other responsibilities during the day, please get in touch and tell us you are interested. If transport is a problem for you, let us know and we'll see what we can do.

Our next **Equipment Demonstration and Advice Day** runs from 10.30am – 2pm on **Monday 22nd October** at the Parkside Centre, Outwood. We will be joined by colleagues from Healthwatch, West Yorkshire Trading Standards, RNIB, and OrCam (specialist providers of pioneering artificial vision technology – please contact the office if you'd like a leaflet), so do come along and have a chat with them about the products and services they offer. 2019 diaries and wall calendars will be available for sale. If you can't get to Demo Day and would like a diary or calendar, please call the office for details and current prices.

Forthcoming Demo Days in 2019: Monday 28th January, Monday 29th April, Monday 15th July and Monday 4th November.

We are now taking bookings for our **Christmas Party**, which will be held on **Tuesday 11th December** at The Elizabethan Gallery, Brook Street, Wakefield WF1 1QW. Arrive from 11.30am for tea and coffee. We are doing things a bit differently this year and having a two-course sit-down meal of traditional Yorkshire pie and peas followed by a hot pudding! There will be a Christmas quiz and other festive entertainment. All we ask is a contribution of £6 per person. To book please contact the office, and don't forget to let us know any dietary requirements.

Coffee mornings (all 10am until 12 noon):

Parkside Centre, Outwood: Mondays 3rd September, 1st October, 5th November, and 3rd December (when our Christmas Draw will take place!).

Cluntergate Centre, Horbury: Tuesdays 11th September (please ring the office the day before to check the building works at the Centre have finished on time), 9th October and 13th November (no December date due to Christmas Party).

St. Giles' Centre, Pontefract: Saturdays 15th September, 20th October, 17th November and 15th December.

Eastmoor lunch and friendship group: Monday 17th September 11.30am – 1.30pm at the Café on the Moor, St. Swithun's Centre, Arncliffe Road, Wakefield WF1 4RR.

Other sources of practical and emotional support

Live Well Wakefield self-management courses/workshops

Would you like support to better manage your health and wellbeing when living with a long-term health condition? Live Well Wakefield offers a 6 week self-management course called the **Expert Patients Programme** which helps put you in control of some of the difficulties that living with a health issue can bring. The course is delivered by two specially trained volunteer tutors who have personal experience of living with a long-term health condition and have been participants on EPP courses. You will also meet and share experiences with other people facing similar challenges to you.

Live Well Wakefield will be running the general self-management EPP course **exclusively for Wakefield District Sight Aid** members in February 2019. To find out more and to register your interest, please contact contact us in the office.

In addition, a range of workshops offering health and wellbeing support are available at a variety of community venues. The topics covered are: **Feeling positive, busting stress; Coping with pain; Managing breathlessness; and Coping with life using relaxation.**

All their services are free, supported by your local NHS, and are informal and friendly. For more information or to book, please call 01924 255363.

Sightline

Sightline provides practical and emotional telephone support for people affected by sight loss. The helpline is staffed entirely by trained volunteers, who are affected by sight loss themselves. Sightline is open 6pm-10pm, 365 days a year.

Telephone: 0800 587 2252 (free from BT landlines and most mobiles)

Email: info@sightline.org.uk Website: www.sightline.org.uk

Turning Point Talking Therapies

Are you feeling anxious, low or stressed? Turning Point Talking Therapies are there to help. The service is accessed via self-referral and Turning Point will work with you to decide the best form of support, which could include one to one therapy and counselling, groups, workshops or online therapy. They also have a self-help library.

If you are aged 18 or over and are registered with a GP surgery in the Wakefield district, you can access their services by contacting them directly. Difficulties treated include: **Stress; Depression and Low Mood; Anxiety and Worry; Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD); Panic Disorder and Panic Attacks; Specific Phobias; Low Self-Esteem or Low Confidence; Social Anxiety; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; Health Anxiety; Anger; Chronic Pain and Long Term Health Conditions.**

You can call in to see them at one of their Talking Shops:
Wakefield Talking Shop, 57 Kirkgate, Wakefield WF1 1HX
Castleford Talking Shop, 133 Carlton Street, Castleford WF10 1EF
Opening times: 8am until 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am until 6pm Saturday, 10am until 4.30pm Sunday.
Telephone: 01924 234860
Email: wakefield.talking@turning-point.co.uk
Website: www.talking.turning-point.co.uk

Office availability

Our office is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 1.30pm. If possible, please get in touch before dropping into the office so we can make sure someone is available to help you. You can call us on 01924 215555 or email admin@wdsa.org.uk.

Newsletter format

The newsletter is available in large print, Braille, audio CD or USB stick, or by email. Please contact us to change how you receive it.

Quiz answers

1. Icarus
2. The Montgolfier Brothers
3. Sir George Cayley
4. They were bicycle repairers
5. The Daily Mail
6. A rain storm cooled down his engine
7. From Newfoundland to Western Ireland
8. The Spirit of St. Louis
9. Sir Leonard Cheshire
10. Seattle