



The Parkside Centre
Leeds Road
Outwood
Wakefield WF1 2PN
Tel: 01924 215555
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Hello everyone and welcome to our Winter newsletter!

Thank you to everyone who completed our customer care survey. We had over 100 responses and it was great to hear about how our services have made such a difference to so many of you. When asked to rate our service out of 10, 98% of those who answered that question rated us as a 7 or higher, with 60% scoring us as 10/10 and 21% scoring us as 9/10.

A few people commented that they would be interested in particular services (e.g. a home visit, talking books, support with attending trips due to mobility difficulties) but did not give their contact details for us to get in touch to arrange this. If there is something more we can do to support you, please give us a call in the office on 01924 215555. We are here to help and are always looking to improve our service, so please don't wait until our next survey if there is something more we can do for you.

Don't forget that you can keep up to date with our latest news and events, as well as relevant news from other organisations and services, by connecting with us on Facebook and Twitter by searching "WDSightAid".

I'd like to say a huge thank you to you - our members, supporters, partners and friends - who inspire me daily and make my job so enjoyable. I'm so grateful to my amazing staff team, who work so hard and who are always coming up with new ideas. And of course massive thanks to all our fabulous volunteers without whom everything would grind to a halt. I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and very happy New Year.

Hayley Grocock, Chief Executive Officer

Wakefield District Sight Aid – charity news

Update from Nic Ford, our Sight Loss Advisor:

Wow what a busy few months! I am delighted to report that our revamped Demonstration Day in October was our busiest yet! The feedback we received regarding the new format and the displays of the new equipment was very positive. Our visitors - Orcam and Trading Standards - also gave glowing reports and said they had been very busy answering lots of questions. If you have any suggestions for future Demonstration Days I would love to hear from you.

It always amazes me when I go out on home visits just how life changing some of our equipment can be for people. The simplicity of fitting tactile markers to oven temperature dials, or issuing a device to allow someone to make themselves a cup of tea, means people can remain as independent as possible. If you think you could benefit from our home visiting service please contact the office.

This newsletter is kindly sponsored by Wakefield Local Optical Committee and they have asked me to remind you about the importance of having regular eye health checks with your local optician, even if you are Sight Impaired or Severely Sight Impaired. Get it booked in if you think you might be due!

I know Christmas can be a difficult time for a lot of people I visit, but I would like to send you all my warmest thoughts and wish you a peaceful Christmas. I look forward to supporting you all in the coming new year.

Update from Jo Brook, our Community Coordinator:

We have had a busy few months creating opportunities for people to link up and have fun.

We relaxed and sat in the sun, admiring Roundhay Park and listening to a brass band. Another trip out found us happily strolling around Rodley Nature Reserve before lunch at the pub and feeding the ducks on the canal. It has been wonderful to enjoy getting out and about, seeing some new friendships develop.

In exciting news, we now have a Younger Members group, which has met a couple of times and is full of ideas for what they want to do next. If you

are interested in finding out more and coming along, please get in touch with the office and keep an eye on our Facebook page where the group's activities will be publicised. The group is very friendly and welcomes new people and ideas.

Our community projects are designed to make links with each other across the district, and sometimes put us in touch with a new friend living not too far away. So, if the winter months are looking a bit off-putting for getting around and feeling connected, remember you can ask to join our telephone befriending service, where we will link you with a specially chosen volunteer who will call and chat to you regularly.

If you want to link with a wider circle of people, consider joining our Friends on the Phone network, where you are linked into a group with 3 or 4 other visually impaired people. You then decide between yourselves when and how often you are going to chat to each other. It's a great way to keep in touch over the colder months and make new friends. The very first Friends on the Phone group we set up is a group of 4 gentlemen, and they are now meeting up for lunches as well as chatting on the phone. Well done, chaps!

Remember, we still run our regular coffee mornings over the winter to give you opportunities to get out, enjoy each other's company, and make some future plans together. We look forward to seeing more of you in 2019, and hearing about any ideas you have to help us create the service you want. Happy New Year!

Update from Neil Newton, our Tech Mate Project Leader

Hello! It's almost three months since the Tech Mate project started and already I have been able to provide help and assistance to many of our members with their technology queries. Whilst everyone has their own particular requirements and interests, I've seen lots of queries about screen magnification, screen reader software and voice commands. We have also had a lot of interest in the Microsoft Seeing AI app. This is a free app for Apple iPhones and iPads which reads text and documents out loud.

We have a dedicated computer in the office which we use to demonstrate JAWS, Dolphin SuperNova Magnifier & Screen Reader, and Dolphin

Guide screen reader software. We also have a Synapptic tablet to demonstrate their popular touch screen and speech output software.

With Christmas just around the corner, computers, smart phones and tablets are a useful way for people to keep in touch with friends and family across the world using applications like Skype and FaceTime. Not only can technology be hugely helpful for keeping in touch but is also invaluable to help people with visual impairments feel connected with the wider world through the internet and social networking.

My normal working days are Wednesdays and Thursdays. I run 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. I am also able to visit you at home and provide technical advice and support over the phone. Please get in touch to find out more.

Christmas Draw

A BIG thank you to our members, friends and business supporters who helped make this year's Christmas Draw such a success. We had more prizes donated than ever before! Here are the results of the draw:

1. Luxury hamper, donated by Lord St. Oswald (our Patron), won by Mrs. B. Dunwell (11066).
2. Christmas hamper, donated by Miss Pam Walters, won by Mike Hobbs (11119).
3. Two brewery tour tickets, donated by Black Sheep Brewery, won by Barry Dixon (11558).
4. Family entry ticket, donated by the Bronte Parsonage Museum, won by Joan Poole (00114).
5. Family entry ticket, donated by Jorvik Viking Centre, won by Mrs. K. Taylor (04283).
6. Family photo shoot and print at Mark Swinford Photography, won by Liz Bilton (01545).
7. Cream tea for two at Marmalade on the Square, won by Vic Willett (09002).
8. A family travel voucher, donated by North Yorkshire Moors Railway, won by Helen Turford (10674).

9. Two open Club race-day tickets, donated by Rippon Racecourse, won by Alan Gilson (02546).
10. £10 gift card, donated by Sainsbury's Trinity Walk, won by Linda Broom (10668).
11. Family entry ticket, donated by the Thackray Museum, won by Kevin Guy (03728).
12. Family entry ticket, donated by The Deep Hull, won by Anne Crowe (05022).
13. Two tickets, donated by Hyde Park Picture House, won by J. Taylor (03158).
14. Bottle of Prosecco, donated by The Spar Outwood, won by Michael Parfitt (07108).
15. Bottle of Prosecco, donated by Hayley Grocock, won by Debbie Marsden (09714).
16. Bottle of whisky, donated by Dr. Norman Waddington, won by M. Brown (04668).
17. Bottle of wine and box of chocolates, donated by Bridget Lockyer, won by N. Jubb (09659).
18. Bottle of wine and box of luxury biscuits, donated by Co-op Outwood, won by Mrs. D. Newton (11077).
19. Bottle of Bucks Fizz, donated by Tesco Express Outwood, won by Maureen McArdle (06486).
20. Christmas cake, donated by Mrs. J. Reynolds, won by Mrs. M Wason (02403).
21. Avon jewellery set, donated by one of our members, won by Paul Rose (09804).
22. Bayliss & Harding Beauticology gift set, donated by one of our members, won by Sandra Hilton (10993).
23. Bayliss & Harding Royal Bouquet gift set, donated by one of our members, won by Helen Turford (10680).
24. Dove Radiant Beauty gift set, donated by Tesco Express Outwood, won by Mrs. B. Dunwell (11067).
25. Lynx Golden Year gift set, donated by Tesco Express Outwood, won by J. Woodfine (10608).
26. Hand-knitted soft doll, donated by one of our members, won by J. Woodfine (10604).
27. Christmas cracker nightdress/pyjama case, made and donated by Mary Townshend, and fluffy slippers, won by Enid Stephenson (04272).

We are pleased to report that this has been our most successful Christmas Prize Draw ever, with 1,410 tickets sold and £1,848 raised through ticket sales and donations, which is £126 more than last year! Thank you so much for supporting our biggest fundraiser of the year, we are truly grateful.

Supporter and fundraising news

This quarter we have received some very generous individual donations from friends and members in memoriam of people sadly passed away and in recognition of the services we provide to our members. Thank you so much for supporting us. We would also like to give sincere thanks to:

- The Corra Bike Ride Charity, who awarded us a fantastic £500.
- The Wakefield Area Local Optical Committee, who donated a generous £500 towards the cost of producing our newsletter.
- The Wakefield office of Gallagher Insurance, who raised a fab £50 on their dress-down day.

We are thrilled to announce that Hayley, our CEO, will be running the London Marathon on 28th April 2019 to raise money for us in celebration of our 150th Birthday! All sponsorship will be gratefully received and will help keep Hayley motivated during the many miles of training she will be doing over the winter months. You can sponsor Hayley online at <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/hayleyunlikely> or by calling the office.

Quiz (with thanks to Jack and Pam Reynolds)

1. From which fruit is the cordial “grenadine” primarily made?
2. What type of instrument is a goombay?
3. Blepharitis is the medical term for inflammation of which part of the body?
4. Who discovered the Victoria Falls in 1855?
5. Who invented the centigrade thermometer?
6. What does DVD commonly stand for?
7. Exodus, the second book of the Bible recounts the departure of the Israelites from which country?
8. What was the nationality of Lazlo Joseph Biro, the inventor of the ball point pen?
9. Which British singer’s real name is Thomas Woodward?

10. Who painted The Rakes Progress?

The answers are at the end of the newsletter!

Dates for your diary

Younger members social group – please see our Facebook group or call the office for details of forthcoming meetings.

Our next **Equipment Demonstration and Advice Day** runs from 10.30am – 2pm on **Monday 28th January** at the Parkside Centre, Outwood. We will be joined by colleagues from various partner organisations including the Yorkshire Cancer Patient Forum, Wakefield Deaf Society and Owlett (a new camera that can help the visually impaired around the house by describing anything placed in front of it) so do come along and have a chat with them about what they do.

Forthcoming Demo Days: 29th April, 15th July and 4th November.

Coffee mornings (all 10am until 12 noon):

Parkside Centre, Outwood: Mondays 4th February, 4th March, 1st April, (no event in May due to May Day Bank Holiday), 3rd June, 1st July

Cluntergate Centre, Horbury: Tuesdays 15th January, 12th February, 12th March, 9th April, 14th May, 11th June

St. Giles' Centre, Pontefract: Saturdays 19th January, 16th February, 16th March, 20th April, 18th May, 15th June

NEW! Saturday social group: Saturday 2nd February 11am – 1pm in the Learning Zone, Wakefield Library, Wakefield One, Burton Street, Wakefield, WF1 2DD. Free tea, coffee and biscuits! This is our first ever Saturday social in central Wakefield, and we will look to make it a regular event if it proves popular so please drop in and help us make it a great success!

Live Well Wakefield Expert Patients Programme, in partnership with Wakefield District Sight Aid especially for visually impaired people

- Are you struggling to manage your day-to-day life with a long-term condition (including sight loss and other conditions)?
- Would you like to learn some tools and techniques to improve your health and wellbeing?
- Do you feel isolated and would like to meet others who understand some of the difficulties you face each day?

President: The Lord St Oswald Founded in 1869 Company No. 7432897 Registered Charity No. 1140483

Make a will, make a difference - we depend on donations and legacies – we are a local charity serving local people – whatever you may choose to leave will really help!

- Finding it difficult to stay positive?

Come and join us on this FREE six-week course and share ideas with other like-minded people to help you improve your self-confidence. The course is delivered by specially trained tutors who all have personal experience of living with a long-term health condition.

Dates: Monday 18th February until Monday 25th March 2019

Time: 1pm – 3.30pm

Venue: Nova, 11 Upper York Street, Wakefield, WF1 3LQ

Places are limited, so please get in touch and book your place today!

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. Please note that the office will be closed for the Christmas and New Year break from Wednesday 19th December, reopening on Monday 7th January. If you need urgent assistance during this time, please contact Social Care Direct on 0345 8 503 503.

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. Pomegranates
2. A drum
3. The eyelid
4. David Livingstone
5. Anders Celsius
6. Digital Versatile Disc – formerly Digital Video Disc
7. Egypt
8. Hungarian
9. Tom Jones
10. William Hogarth