

Vision North Somerset Newsletter

Registered Charity 1165364 September 2016

Staff Changes

Many of you will have received help and support from Shirley Leslie, our Registration and Equipment Advisor, and will be sorry to hear that she is leaving that post. Shirley has been with us for 17 years and has turned her talents to a variety of roles in the organisation. Shirley is not leaving Vision entirely; I am pleased to tell you that she is putting her experience to good use in helping us to develop our training resources. This will have the benefit of raising awareness of the needs of visually impaired people amongst health and social care professionals and also provide Vision with a useful income.

Shirley's role will be filled by Nikki Derrick – previously our Information Officer. Nikki has been with us for 4 years and many people will have met her in the Resource Centre or been visited by her at home. Nikki is very experienced with equipment demonstration and is looking forward to expanding her knowledge about registration and assessment, and working alongside Angela Whitcombe, who is also responsible for registration assessments and equipment.

Newly recruited Anna Flint will be taking over Nikki's previous role and we welcome Anna as our new Information Officer. Anna has been with us for just a few weeks but is already an important part of our team.

After 20 years as Admin and Finance Officer, Joan Sale is retiring this month. Joan has been with us since our days at the Lauriston Hotel – which I'm sure many of you remember. We'll certainly miss Joan after all these years and wish her well in her retirement. Julian Beale will be joining us in September to take over Joan's duties.

The rest of the team, Celia, Nina, Michele, James and Cheryl will continue in their present roles.

Living with Sight Loss

2 Day course with Action for Blind People and Vision North Somerset

The course held in May was very successful. If you missed out and would like to register for the next course please call Nina Farr on 01934 419393. We can arrange the next course as soon as we have sufficient interest.

The course is designed to help people who have recently lost their sight, or those who are facing significant changes in their lives and need support in coming to terms with the issues they face because of sight loss.

Torch Fellowship Group

This friendly group of visually impaired people meet at Milton Baptist Church on the 3rd Saturday of every month at 3pm. There is an informal service followed by tea and a chat. Transport to the group can be provided.

The Torch Trust provides Christian literature in large print, Braille and on CD's or memory sticks. Telephone groups are

also available. For more information have a chat with Cathy on 01934 416051 or Pauline on 01934 415401.

Sky Accessible Remote

Sky customers with disabilities can request a Sky+ remote control free of Charge. The Sky+ features a textured easy grip design, raised contour buttons with additional tactile points, larger and bolder button graphics and high visibility buttons.

The account holder can order the remote for a family member who is in permanent residence at the account holders address.

Information Technology

Vision is working with Action for Blind People to provide one to one IT tuition for visually impaired people. This includes desktop computers, tablets and smart phones. If you've ever wondered what it's all about, now is the time to find out. You will receive one to one help from the same specially trained (and very patient) volunteer every week to help you to get to grips with sending an email, using a smart phone or whatever it is you wish to accomplish.

We provide an opportunity to talk it through first with a member of Action staff to ensure IT is right for you. Call Nina at the office for more information.

Vision North Somerset Policies

Like all organisations Vision has to have policies and procedures in place to make sure we comply with rules and regulations. These cover a wide range of issues including Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and many more.

We want our service users to be aware that we work hard to ensure that we cover all aspects of these requirements and we want to give you the opportunity to comment on them. We have uploaded all of the policies to our website so you can take a look for yourselves at: visionnorthsomerset.wordpress.com

Please provide any feedback you have via email or in writing to Celia Henshall at the office. Please let us know if you require any specific policies in alternative formats.

North Somerset Council People and Communities Board

The board brings together children and families, community safety, health, housing, social care and the stronger communities work streams.

The aim of the board is to provide a strategic framework to ensure that people in North Somerset, stay healthy, remain independent and keep safe. The board reports to the North Somerset Partnership which includes a number of strategic partners including the police. The aim is for everyone to work together to ensure that North Somerset is a good place to live and residents are well supported.

Look on the council's website if you would like to comment on the new strategy – it will be out for consultation in October: www.n-somerest.gov.uk

Outreach clinic

A satellite Intravitreal Clinic for people with wet macular degeneration and other related conditions is running at St Georges Health Centre in Worle. This means that people

needing regular lucentis injections no longer need to travel to Bristol to receive treatment at the Eye Hospital.

Vision is pleased to announce that we now have a volunteer in place at the clinic to provide information and support to patients and ensure they are aware of the (non-medical) help that is available to them.

Low Vision appointments at Neva Road

The North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group has commissioned a one year pilot Low Vision project with Vision North Somerset.

Staff member Angela Whitcombe has received special training to enable her to provide a functional low vision assessment and give advice about magnifiers and lighting.

Service users will have needed to have had an eye health check either at their local opticians or the Eye Hospital within the last 12 months before booking an appointment with Angela.

Feedback about the service has been very positive. People welcome the fact that all aspects of low vision are covered including the importance of lighting and the opportunity to try out video magnifiers as well as the more traditional style.

Advice is given about lighting throughout the home to aid daily living and to help reduce trips and falls.

Contact Nina Farr at the office if you think a low vision appointment would be helpful to you.

Wills and Legacies

Vision needs to make the most of opportunities to raise income from legacies to keep the organisation running, so we can

continue to help blind and partially sighted people in the future. Writing your will can be a depressing thought so we've tried to be positive by encouraging people to **DO SOMETHING AMAZING!**

A new leaflet is enclosed with the newsletter and we are asking you to pass it on to family or friends. We've also put the text into large print to make it easier to read for our members.

Our team of volunteers will be helping us to drop off our new leaflet into solicitors offices and other establishments where we hope that the general public will be moved to **DO SOMETHING AMAZING!**

Vision North Somerset

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