

Vision North Somerset Newsletter

Reg Charity 1165364 March 2017

Open Day

Vision North Somerset invites all of our service users to come along to our Open Day on Thursday 27th April from 10.30am to 3.00pm. This is an opportunity to try our aids and equipment in our Resource Centre and meet Vision staff.

We have invited colleagues from associated organisations to come along to tell you about the ways in which they too support people with sight loss. Including:

- **Optelec:** suppliers of electronic magnifiers and other technology based equipment.
- **The Macular Society:** to provide information and support for people with Macular issues.
- **Wiltshire Farm Foods:** suppliers of balanced and nutritiously prepared meals delivered to your door.
- **Woodspring Talking News:** our colleagues who provide a weekly audio version of local news delivered to your door.

You can also find out more about how our partnership with Action for Blind People can help you to find the best IT options for you. Desktop computers, iPads and iPhones are all very accessible for visually impaired people. We can show you how and provide free tuition. You can ask other visually impaired people how it works for them.

Do come along and find out more about what's on offer. Coffee and tea will be available and we have a comfortable seating area. Please note parking is only available for blue badge holders, but there will be space for dropping off/picking up.

Your Support needed for 2017

See Michele's appeal on the back page and consider how you might support your local charity.

Priority Services Register for older and disabled people (PSR)

This can help you get extra help and support with your energy supply. If you are a pensioner, disabled or chronically sick, or have a hearing or visual impairment you can get the following help:

- Protection from cold callers with a password scheme to keep you safe
- Bills in Braille, large print, audio tape, text phone or typetalk
- Priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted
- Alternative facilities for cooking and heating if your supply is interrupted
- Free advice on being more energy efficient
- Your meter moved free of charge if it's hard for you to use or read
- Annual gas safety checks

Telephone your own gas and/or electricity supplier to set up your own PSR.

Got a BT home phone?

A free spam calls filter is available to reduce nuisance calls.

Call Protect blocks numbers on the BT blacklist, it proactively scans for the worst offending nuisance callers and will automatically divert calls to your “junk mail box”.

You can also create a personal blacklist of up to 100 numbers by adding any number you like.

Call Protect also allows you to block certain types of calls – those from international numbers, withheld numbers and unrecognised numbers.

In all three cases, nuisance calls will be directed straight to the “junk voice mail box” – completely separate from your regular answer phone – so your phone won’t ring at all and diverted callers can be directed to leave a message. You will be able to check the mail box to listen to any messages that callers have left. To sign up call 1572 on your BT landline or visit BT’s Call Protect webpage at

<https://www.productsandservices.bt.com/products/phone/call-protect>

The Telephone Preference Service

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is the official central opt out register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing calls. It is a legal requirement that all organisations (including charities, voluntary organisations and political parties) do not make such calls to numbers registered on the TPS unless they have your consent to do so.

The service is free to all landlines and also mobile phones (although they cannot stop text messages).

To register telephone 0345 070 0707, or visit www.tpsonline.org.uk

Mail preference service

If you are fed up with receiving so much junk mail you can contact the mail preference service. The Service is **free**, beware of companies offering this as a charged for service.

You can sign up on line at <http://www.mpsonline.org.uk>

Weston General Hospital Consultation

Changes are being proposed that will help Weston General Hospital continue to provide services for local people. The hospital and the North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) want to hear your views and listen to your ideas before making any firm decisions. Come along and find out more at the Rendezvous Café at Vision North Somerset on Thursday 16th March at 2.00pm.

Staff from the hospital and CCG would like you to come along to share your views and help to shape and develop ideas to make Weston General work as a hospital for local people. You can also give your views on line at www.northsomersetccg.nhs/wgh-engagement

Via email: wgh.engagement@nhs.net

Or by post: North Somerset CCG, Castlewood, Clevedon, BS21 6FW

Rendezvous Café

Mandie is wondering where you all are? Drop in anytime between 2.00pm – 4.00pm on a Thursday for a cup of tea and a chat in the Bradbury Room here at Vision. Bring your sighted friends, family or carers along too.

In 2 Biking

Indoor and outdoor cycling at Worle Community School, New Bristol Road, Weston. Sessions take place on Friday between 5.00 - 7.00pm and Saturday between 2.00 and 4.00pm depending on what type of bike you need. There are a range of adapted bikes available so this can be fun for everyone.

Sessions cost £3.50. To book contact Lin Thomas on 07557 132680.

Your support 2017

Hi,

My name is Michele Blake, many of you may know of me from my days of working with Shirley Leslie as Special Needs Advisor. I have a different role with Vision North Somerset now – in fact two roles! And I'd like to explain just how important they are.

My first role is working with our volunteers. I can't begin to tell you just how important they are to Vision North Somerset – we simply could not provide all of our support to you, without them. Many people think volunteers are a free resource. **Not true!** In order to ensure volunteers are fitted into a role that suits them, carry out their tasks appropriately and have an understanding of the issues that our members face – we have to make sure they are properly recruited, trained and supported. This support

results in happy volunteers who stay with us for a long time and do a fantastic job. However, a good volunteer programme costs money.

We also have to pay for really boring stuff like telephone bills, utilities, insurance, photocopying and wages of the staff responsible for delivering our services.

That brings me onto my second role which is that of Funding Officer. It's daunting to know that we need to raise £50,000 to meet our costs for 2017– and yes I know, it's a huge sum! I have many tools in my kit bag to help me raise funds – applications to Trust Funds and other organisations, legacies, elephant collections – we leave no stone unturned. One of our funding streams is donations from our members. This is a really important source of funding for us and we are hoping that in 2017 our members will again be generous in their donations and help us to take a step towards that much needed £50,000. If you feel you would like to show your support please take a look at the enclosed form to see which way of giving suits you best and don't forget to complete gift aid if you are a UK tax payer.

Thank you.

With Kind Regards,

Michele

Vision North Somerset

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