



Newsletter

November 2019

Hello everyone,

Welcome to our final newsletter for this year. As ever, we can't believe how quickly it's flown by! Merry Christmas from everyone here.

Sight Support Information Days are changing lives

Our Sight Support Information Days are changing lives for the better. If you haven't been to one yet, it may well be worth putting a date in your diary for next year – see our enclosed calendar for 2020.

Anne Griffin had struggled with Age-related Macular Degeneration for seven years, but a visit to the information day in Matlock two years ago marked a new start. Since then we've improved the lighting in her home, making life easier and enabling her to continue to enjoy reading, and added bumpons to her cooker and washing machine to help with those everyday tasks.

“The Rehabilitation Support Worker was the one who set the ball rolling,” says Anne. “From the open day, to her visit, the advice she gave me was so helpful. In the last two years you have greatly enhanced my life.”

There is far more to Sight Support Information Days than finding out about our services. It is like a market place for everything in your area to support people with a visual impairment, from companies offering help with technology, electronic reading aids, and accessible mobile phones, to local agencies helping with issues like fire safety, welfare rights, and access to library services. We hope to see you soon.

Buxton Glaucoma Support Group's next meeting is on 1st November at Buxton Methodist Church, Main Hall, Chapel Street, Buxton SK17 6HX, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. All welcome. Please contact Cavendish Hospital, Buxton, on 01298 212800 if you have any queries.

Tips to help with Reading and Writing

For people with sight loss reading and writing can be very difficult, or even feel impossible. However, there are some things that you can do to make life a little easier:

- Lots of places, such as doctors' surgeries, welfare agencies, etc. will provide large print versions of written materials on request. Derbyshire Libraries also stock large print books which are free to borrow for members.
- Making sure you have the right lighting and equipment is essential. For example, by using a daylight task lamp and a magnifier it may be possible to continue reading and writing.
- For those who can no longer see well enough to read and write, audio solutions are available, such as talking newspapers, magazines and books.
- Many newer Smartphones now come with their own screen reader, and you can add software, known as apps, which can help with things like reading out text for you, or getting around. Many of these are free.
- Small recording devices are available, or again, functions on your phone, to let you record a short message or note for either yourself or to send to others.

We can offer help and advice about reading and writing, and about equipment that may help. So if you're struggling, or just interested, feel free to get in touch.

A Big Thank You

Without our dedicated volunteers we couldn't do what we do, so we were delighted to say thank you to many of them at their annual 'fuddle.' Eighteen volunteers with a total of 130 years' service were presented with certificates, including John Binks for 21 years, and Pat Haywood, who received an award for 25 years' service earlier in the summer. Double congratulations to Marge Rose, our volunteer in Buxton, who received a certificate from us for ten years' service, and has also won an Award for Excellence from the Macular Society.

Legal Matters – Lasting Power of Attorney

We all need a bit of help at times, and if you are having difficulties with tasks like getting to the bank or organising prescriptions, one option is to consider giving some trusted people the legal power to do them for you.

There are two separate Lasting Powers of Attorney. The first covers finances and property, such as taking money out of the bank for you, and the second covers your health and wellbeing, such as allowing someone to speak to your doctor on your behalf. You can take out either, or both.

You can choose up to four attorneys who can manage your affairs, but they must be put in place while you have the capacity to decide. It is something you can do yourself online through the Office of the Public Guardian, but the forms are long, so many people choose to use the advice and expertise of a professional will writer or solicitor instead.

Phil Milton is a will writer with the Society of Will Writers for DM Wills. He said: “If Lasting Power of Attorney is put in place, your chosen representatives will be able to manage your life for you in the way you would wish. The Office of the Public Guardian puts a legal responsibility on them to do everything in the best interests of that person.”

The Age UK website at www.ageuk.org.uk has some helpful information. Choose Legal issues from the menu under Information and advice.

Contact Us: Our office hours 9am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday. For Chesterfield office, please call first as staff are often out on visits.

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