



The Parkside Centre
Leeds Road
Outwood
Wakefield WF1 2PN
Tel: 01924 215555
Website: www.wdsa.org.uk

Welcome to our Winter 2017 Newsletter

Hello everyone,

It has certainly been a busy couple of months since I last wrote to you!

We've been working with our friends at RNIB to enable the running of two important courses here at Parkside – a four day Living With Sight Loss course and Online Today, a day session focusing on helping people with technology and using the internet.

We've been recruiting for a new Community Coordinator and Sight Loss Advisor following the departures of Lizz and Caroline, and are looking forward to announcing our new appointments in our next newsletter.

And of course we've been running our regular coffee mornings, Demo Day, and have been busily preparing for our annual Christmas Draw (more on that later!).

My heartfelt thanks to Bev Poppleton and Nicola Ellis, who have been working so hard keeping everything running whilst we have been recruiting new staff and are looking forward to a well-deserved break over Christmas. And of course huge thanks to all our tremendous volunteers without whom the charity simply wouldn't be able to function.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

With warm wishes,

Hayley

Wakefield District Sight Aid – charity news

Equipment and Advice Demonstration Days

These are held at the Parkside Centre, Outwood. They are a great opportunity to try out specialist equipment, meet with other people who have visual impairments, get advice and support, or simply enjoy tea and cake in a friendly, supportive environment. These events are open to visually impaired people, their families, carers, professionals and the general public. As with all our events, guide dogs are welcome.

The next events are Monday 22nd January 2018 and Monday 19th March 2018 and both will run from 10.30am until 2pm.

Coffee mornings

Our coffee mornings run as part of our Community Outreach Programme. We are really grateful for the support of our community anchor partners for supporting our work and our volunteers who make these events happen.

Our next dates are as follows, all events run from 10am until 12noon:

Outwood: Parkside Centre, Leeds Road, Wakefield, WF1 2PN
Mondays: 5th February, 5th March

Horbury: Cluntergate Centre, Cluntergate, Horbury, WF4 5DA
Tuesdays: 16th January, 13th February, 13th March

Eastmoor: St. Swithun's Community Centre, Arncliffe Road, WF1 4RW
Wednesdays: 10th January, 14th February, 14th March

Pontefract: St.Giles' Church, Market Place, Pontefract, WF8 1AT
Saturdays: 20th January, 17th February, 17th March

Our **befriending service** is available to all members of Wakefield District Sight Aid. We'll pair you with one of our volunteers who will visit or telephone you. Please contact the office for more details.

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. We are very grateful for your support.

We would also like to thank the following organisations:

- Members of the Co-op at Woodlesford, who raised a massive £5,411.54 for us part of their Local Community Fund.
- The Mid-West Yorkshire Branch of the Keep Fit Association, who chose us as their charity of the year and raised a fantastic £500.
- Aviva, who donated £100 to us in recognition of our application to their Community Fund, which sadly wasn't successful on this occasion. Huge thanks to all who voted for us.

Thanks also to Mrs. Lynn Hobbs who kindly donated some office supplies.

Did you know that you can collect FREE funds for us every time you shop online? Visit the link below to start raising donations for us every time you shop online with over 3,300 retailers – it won't cost you a penny:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/wdsa/>

Christmas Draw

Thank you to our members, friends and business supporters who helped make this year's Christmas Draw such a success. We are so grateful for your support. Here are the results of the draw:

1. Luxury hamper, donated by Lord St. Oswald (our Patron), won by Mr. Norman Martin.
2. Christmas hamper, donated by Miss Pam Walters, won by T. McArdle.
3. Hamper, donated by Warburtons, won by Billy Stark.
4. £50 of Love2Shop vouchers, donated by Complete Office Solutions, won by Gordon Dowding.

5. Two brewery tour tickets, donated by Black Sheep Brewery, won by Mrs. L. Grey.
6. Entry tickets for four, donated by Jorvik Viking Centre, won by Shirley Clifton.
7. Two race-day tickets, donated by Rippon Racecourse, won by M. Sharkey.
8. A family travel voucher, donated by North Yorkshire Moors Railway, won by Mr. Dove.
9. A family entry ticket, donated by Abbey House Museum, won by Kevin Guy.
10. Two tickets, donated by Hyde Park Picture House, won by Barry Inman.
11. Four tickets, donated by West Yorkshire Playhouse, won by Graham Bell.
12. Family entry ticket, donated by the Bronte Parsonage Museum, won by Sherri Holland.
13. Family entry ticket, donated by the Thackray Museum, won by M. Brook.
14. £20 M&S vouchers and two boxes of chocolates, donated by Mrs. Spurr, won by J. Pearson.
15. Restaurant voucher, donated by the Wetherby Whaler, won by Barry Inman.
16. Christmas cake, donated by Mrs. J. Reynolds, won by Robert Palmer.
17. £10 voucher, donated by M&S Wakefield, won by James Woodfine.
18. £10 voucher, donated by Sainsbury's Trinity Walk, won by Mrs. N. Bradshaw.
19. Bottle of Grant's whisky, donated by Dr. Norman Waddington, won by Beverley Davies.
20. Jack Daniel's poker set, donated by Hayley Grocock, won by Terry.
21. Bayliss & Harding gift set, donated by Beryl Senkiw, won by Angela Longbottom.

We are pleased to report that this year's draw and donations raised a total of £1,722.05, which is £227.80 more than last year!

Collection boxes are available for your own home or for local shops and other retail outlets – please contact us for more information.

Sponsored events – we are always grateful when people want to fundraise for us. If you would like to organise a sponsored event in aid of Wakefield District Sight Aid, please contact the office to find out more about how we can support you.

Christmas quiz – (thanks to our volunteer Jack Reynolds)

1. What is the opening line of 'The Christmas Song' by Nat King Cole?
2. In which town was Jesus brought up as a child?
3. Who is the Patron Saint of Children?
4. According to the Christmas carol, which King last looked out on the feast of Stephen?
5. Which famous Christmas poem was written by Clement Clark Moore?
6. By what title was the song Jingle Bells originally released?
7. Balsam, Douglas, Fraser and Noble are all types of what?
8. True or false: Jesus was born on Christmas Day?
9. The Christmas Carol 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen' brings tidings of what?
10. What is a baby reindeer called?

The answers are at the end of the newsletter.

Hyacinth bulbs – The Rotary Club of Ossett and Horbury Ossett Phoenix Rotary Club will be providing a pot of hyacinths for all our members who live in Horbury and Ossett. They are hoping to deliver around the 14th February 2018. If you do **NOT** want to receive one, then please call us on 01924 215555 to let us know. Thank you.

National and international medical news

Digital scan of the eye provides accurate picture of a person's general health

Looking into the eye - using digital techniques and analysing the huge amounts of resulting data - can provide an accurate picture of a person's general medical condition, research from the Medical University of Vienna shows. This enables “personalised medicine” and facilitates early diagnosis and treatment for conditions such as diabetes.

Source: Science Daily, 28th November 2017,

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/11/171128091855.htm>

Is the government's new industrial strategy a new chance for medical research charities to lead the way?

Fight for Sight, the eye research charity, believes that the publication of the government's Industrial Strategy White Paper provides an unexpected lifeline for the millions of people affected by sight loss. According to the charity, there are a number of strands of the White Paper that are inextricably linked to the challenge of ending sight loss. The 5 foundations of productivity mirror the conditions necessary for funding of world class eye research to deliver treatments to patients. The UK medical research sector needs good ideas, skilled people, investment in infrastructure, a vibrant economic environment to nurture new businesses and great places in which to develop the research base.

Source: Fight for Sight Press Office, 1st December 2017,

<https://www.fightforsight.org.uk/news-and-views/articles/news/is-the-government-s-new-industrial-strategy-a-new-chance-for-medical-research-charities-to-lead-the-way/>

Trigger for most common form of vision loss discovered

Researchers from the University of Virginia Health School of Medicine have discovered a critical trigger for the damaging inflammation that causes macular degeneration and ultimately robs millions of their sight. The finding may allow doctors to halt the inflammation early on, saving people from blindness. The implications of this finding could be huge - almost 200 million people in the world have macular degeneration and if this were translated into a country, it would be the eighth most populated nation in the world.

Source: Science Daily, 27th November 2017,

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/11/171127135802.htm>

Is the number of children with vision impairment increasing?

British Medical Journal (BMJ) Open has published a paper on the rise in numbers of children with certified vision impairment (VI) across England and Wales. New analysis shows an increase in the number of children newly certified as severely sight impaired (SSI) or sight impaired (SI) from 8.2 per 100,000 in 1999/2000 to 13.3 per 100,000 in 2014/15. The authors conclude that this does reflect an actual increase in the incidence of blindness in children (although the numbers are still very small).

Source: RNIB Insight Online, 6th October 2017,
<http://www.rnib.org.uk/insight-online/increasing-number-children-vi>

Novelty contact lenses ‘can cause sight loss’

Eye experts have warned of the risks of wearing novelty contact lenses at Halloween, saying they can cause nasty infections and scratches to the eyes. Cosmetic contact lenses are often sold in joke and fancy-dress shops and on websites, but they come without instructions on safe use. In extreme cases, this can lead to impaired vision and sight loss. The Association of Optometrists said its members often saw people with eye problems after wearing novelty lenses.

Source: BBC News, 19th October 2017,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-41678947>

Office availability

Our offices are open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 1.30pm. Thursday opening hours are for telephone contact only please. If possible, please do try to ring before calling at the office, to ensure an appropriately experienced member of staff is available to help. We don't want you to have a wasted journey.

Please note that we will be closed for the festive period from Wednesday 20th December 2017, returning on Monday 8th January 2018. If you need urgent assistance during this period, please contact Social Care Direct on 0345 8 503 503.

Helpful numbers and information

NHS Direct 111 – When you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. Call your GP Surgery or Community Pharmacy for less urgent needs.

Single Point of Contact 01924 327591 – If you are housebound and need a district nurse.

Live Well Wakefield 01924 255363 – Signposting service. Wellbeing support with advice about groups and activities in your local area.

Health Improvement Team 01924 307348 – Weight management, exercise, nutrition, and general healthy lifestyle support.

Care Link 01977 788000 – Telecare emergency alarms and pendants and visiting services.

Access Bus 0113 3481903 – Dial-a-Ride bus for supported door-to-door local journeys, registration required. Free to ENCS permits, such as Senior, Disabled or Blind Persons Passes.

We would like to draw our members' attention to our friends at the **Macular Society** who have a lot of helpful leaflets and information sheets available to either download, order in hard copy or listen to.

For more information about the Macular Society contact the helpline

Call: 0300 3030 111, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Email: help@macularsociety.org

Write: Helpline, Macular Society, PO Box 1870, Andover, SP10 9AD

Newsletter format – this is available in this printed form, by email, on disc or cassette and in braille. **We are now making the newsletter available on USB stick.** Members who have the appropriate equipment will be able to use this format, **so please do let us know if you wish to change the way you currently receive it.** Telephone 01924 215555 or email admin@wdsa.org.uk.

Christmas quiz answers

1. Chestnuts roasting on an open fire
2. Nazareth
3. Saint Nicholas
4. Wenceslas
5. Twas the night before Christmas (originally called A visit from St. Nicholas)
6. One Horse Open Sleigh
7. Christmas trees/Fir trees
8. False: Although not impossible, it was very unlikely that Jesus was actually born on Christmas Day
9. Comfort and Joy
10. A calf