

Essex Blind Charity



Spotlight

June 2019

ISSUE 90

Contents:

Editorial	page 3
Community Support Team	page 4
Colchester Sight Centre	page 5
News from the Midwest	page 6
Spotlight On	page 8
Tending Talks	page 9
Read House	page 10
Quiz	page 11
Travel	page 12
Equipment and Technology	page 14
Entertainment	page 16
Activities	page 18
Book Review	page 19
Answers to Quiz	page 19

Please send your articles for inclusion in Spotlight to:

The Editor

Essex Sight
40 Osborne Street
Colchester
CO2 7DB
01206 548196
Email: services@essexsight.org.uk

Items for the next issue should reach the Editor by 17th July



The Editor writes:

Welcome to the June edition of Spotlight. I was overwhelmed with items to add into this edition, so many thanks to all the contributors, your hard work reporting on events, writing reviews and sending items of interest has filled the newsletter. In fact, there was so much information, I have had to wield my editing pen (actually my keyboard), so if your lovely prose isn't exactly as you remember it, I'm very sorry, but it was the only way to cram everything in!

This edition has a diverse content, from the review of a 20th century literary classic to the latest object recognition apps available on your smart phone, a new 18 - 30 travel offer for young people, a festival weekend and some great entertainment. It really is all packed in this issue!

We hope you will find the articles informative and of interest. Please feel free to share Spotlight with other visually impaired people and their carers. Everyone who is newly registered in Essex will receive a copy of Spotlight and they can request their own copy in large print format, on tape or memory stick or by email. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide Braille copies.

I hope you will all continue to send your contributions, as your stories and experiences make Spotlight of interest to everyone. You can email articles to services@essexsight.org.uk

Editor

Community Support Team by Jonathan Dixon

I would like to thank the kind people who have donated items of equipment they no longer have use for or belonged to relatives. They wanted the equipment to go on and be of use to someone else who is visually impaired, and we are only too happy to help this wish come true. The items are listed in this edition of spotlight and on our website. They are all on display at the Colchester Sight Centre, where you are welcome to come and try them out. The screen readers would have cost thousands when new, so to be able to have one free of charge is an amazing opportunity!

I contacted the CEO of East Suffolk and North East Essex Foundation Trust to ask why patients were having such a hard time trying to get through to the eye clinic. Having had many conversations with distressed people, with some spending up to 8 hours on the phone with no response, I felt the trust needed to do something about it, quickly. Thankfully, I received a swift response from the trust apologising and explaining that there were in fact a whole suite of numbers for the eye clinic, but due to an administrative oversight, they had not been made public.

We now have the numbers on our website and they are listed on page 23 in this edition, so you should not have any issues in getting in touch, but if you do, please let me know.

Tom Good from Fenn Wright had an excellent run at the London Marathon, completing the course in a very respectable 03:37:56. I contacted Tom on behalf of Essex Sight to thank him for his hard work in completing the marathon and for raising the money on our behalf. I would also like to thank you if you sponsored Tom as he raised a total of £1,049.50.

Colchester Sight Centre by Carol Massey



It seems like Summer might finally be upon us and protecting your eyes is very important in the sunshine. We have a large selection of fitovers in the Sight Centre. Please come and try some out.

Oxsight – Low Vision Demonstration Day

Do you have peripheral vision loss, caused by conditions such as Glaucoma, Retinitis Pigmentosa, Diabetic Retinopathy or stroke? Oxsight will be visiting the Sight Centre on Monday 10th June between 10am and 2pm to demonstrate their wearable device which can enhance vision. No appointment is necessary.

As well as Oxsight, June will be a very busy month for us here. On Friday 14th we will be at the Older Persons' Awareness Day, being held at Firstsite in Colchester. This event is an opportunity to find out what support and services are available for older people in the area. Later on in the month, we are hosting Guide Dogs for some MyGuide training.

Carol
carol@essexsight.org.uk

Colchester Sight Centre Activities

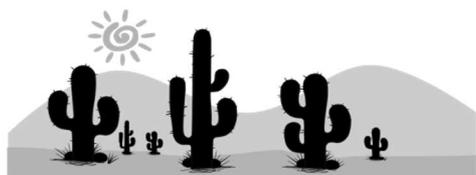
Weekly

Tuesdays	10am-12	Coffee Morning iPad/iPhone sessions (appointment only)
Wednesdays	10am-12	Correspondence Reading (home visiting service also available).

Monthly

1 st Thursday	10am-12n	Knitting Group
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News from the Midwest by Carol Massey



Braintree **Brentwood**
Chelmsford **Maldon**

I really enjoy visiting our Sight Centres around Essex. We have such fantastic volunteers and their local knowledge is invaluable when it comes to helping clients.

Awareness Day Morrisons, Wycke Hill, Maldon CM9 6GG Thursday 11th July 9am – 3pm

For the first time ever, we will be holding an awareness day at Morrisons Supermarket in Maldon. We want to reach as many people as possible and being at a major supermarket should be an ideal opportunity for this.

National Volunteers Week – 3rd to 9th June 2019

3rd – 9th June is National Volunteers Week and we will be at two volunteer events this month, looking for people to join our team.

On Monday 3rd June we will be at Brentwood Theatre between 11am and 2pm.

On Thursday 6th June we are at VolFest 2019. This takes place in Chelmsford Town Centre and many charities come along.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in volunteering with Essex Sight, please come along for a chat or visit one of our regular sight centres.

Oxsight Low Vision Day Friday 21st June 10am- 2pm

This is a joint promotion held with Support 4 Sight in their centre at 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford. Oxsight will be demonstrating their new device for people with peripheral vision loss (see more details under Colchester).

Professional Vision Friday 5th July 10am – 1pm

Professional Vision will be joining us at our regular Sight Centre in Chelmsford Library, demonstrating their latest low vision technology.

If you need any further information or clarification, please contact me.

Carol
carol@essexsight.org.uk

Upcoming dates for the sight centres are:

Braintree: 19th June, 17th July, 21st August

Brentwood: 10th June, 8th July, 12th August

Chelmsford: Every Friday

Maldon: 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August

Spotlight On

LOOKfest!

LOOKfest! is an accessible summer festival for families with a visually impaired parent or child. It takes place from 26-29th July, in the great outdoors and under canvas in rural Kentchurch, Herefordshire.

This festival is run by LOOK UK, a charity that aims to empower young visually impaired (VI) people to thrive. LOOKfest! is a unique event, created by VI people, for VI people.

On the beautiful and tranquil [festival site](#), you are free to roam, join in with a host of activities or kick back and relax. You can feel the festival fever with fantastic performances from visually impaired creatives and get involved in our sport, dance, crafts, creative music sessions and more! LOOK runs a free peer to peer mentor service which links VI people together for inspiration, guidance and support. Mentors will be running workshops, hosting fun and games and Q&As.

Ticket Details

All tickets are charged at the same rate for VI and sighted guests.

2 and under FREE

Child Ticket (3 – 17) £35

Parent/Carer Ticket (18+) £55

Accommodation

Glamping tent 6 bed £65 for the full weekend

Glamping tent 4 bed £55 for the full weekend

Camping pitch £10 per tent for the full weekend

For more information or to make a booking tel: 07470872782 / 07464351958 or email: events@look-uk.org

Website: <https://lookfest.org/>

Tendring Talks by Denise Sanders



It has been great to see some new faces at our sight centre at Cadows on a Thursday afternoon. Please spread the word if you know of anyone with a visual impairment and who would like to join us for a chat, drink and cake!

Just a reminder that everyone is most welcome at Clacton Macular Society; those living with macular disease or indeed living with a different eye condition. The group leader is Peter Bareham, tel: 01255 430386. The group meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month (excluding December) in Sam's Hall, Community Voluntary Services Tendring, Rosemary Road, Clacton, CO15 1NX.

Here's a report from Richard and Lyn (two of our volunteers) who have been attending the Connaught Club at Read House, which Emma Bonham from Deafblind UK took over:

Emma had a task as most of the members were at the age of not wanting to try anything new, but she encouraged us to make scented pomanders for drawers & wardrobes. The following meeting, we had our guide describing her adventures during her career.

On 19th May, Emma arranged an outing to a Steam Railway. We didn't realise it was a themed Vintage Encounter. Many people wore 40's and 50's clothing, there were stalls selling vintage clothes and refreshments, vintage cars, army vehicles and of course, steam train rides. In the old loading shed, two singers and a Brass Band covered songs from both wars and a dance teacher taught dances from that era. Altogether it was a fantastic day, full of things to do with a great atmosphere. If you are interested in joining the group, it takes place on 2nd Tuesday in the month at Read House, Frinton. Contact Emma on 07932 165719.

Upcoming dates for our sight centre at Harwich Library:

11th June

13th August

Read House, Frinton on Sea by Janet Plant



Read House is the residential care home run by Essex Blind Charity in Frinton on Sea. The home specialises in the care of elderly people with sight problems. We offer permanent and respite care (short breaks) by staff who have all been trained in visual awareness. The Home is situated on the seafront at Frinton on Sea, a short distance from the town centre with its friendly local shops.

If you would like to find out more about Read House or to receive our Information Pack, please contact me or Sandra on 01255 673654. We are more than happy to show you round at any time to suit you.

Quiz

Can you identify all the “Margarets”

1. The Iron Lady
2. Title of Rod Stewart song
3. Legendary ballerina
4. American stand up comedienne/actress/fashion designer
5. Author of The Handmaid’s Tale
6. Author of Gone with the Wind
7. Former Australian tennis player
8. American actress
9. English stage, film and TV actress, roles included Miss Marple
10. English film actress, famous in the 1940s
11. Professional marathon runner from Kenya
12. American actress with a famous actor brother (John)
13. British Labour politician
14. English Actress with career spanning six decades
15. Sung vocals on Mike Oldfield song Moonlight Shadow

Travel

Specialist tour operator offers first 18-30s trip for sighted and visually impaired travellers.

Award-winning tour operator [Traveleyes](#), now in its 15th year, is the world's leading provider of inclusive, multi-sensory, worldwide adventures for blind and sighted travellers and is now bringing the chance to travel to a younger visually impaired and sighted audience.

Traveleyes was founded in 2004 by award-winning entrepreneur and television presenter, Amar Latif (*BBC Two's Travelling Blind & River Walks, Channel 4's How To Get Fit Fast, Thrifty Ways To Summer Holiday & The Last Leg Goes Down Under*) who by the age of 18 had lost 95% of his sight. After being rejected by mainstream travel companies as a solo blind traveller, Amar established Traveleyes to allow blind and visually impaired (VI) people from all over the globe to explore the world with freedom and independence. With dedicated in-house products, business development, marketing, operations and customer departments, Traveleyes has grown to offer around 65 trips a year, with full city breaks, sun, sea and sand holidays, discovery, and activity holiday programmes all available.

For 2019, Amar and the team at Traveleyes wanted to encourage more younger VI and sighted travellers to explore the world together and have launched their first ever 18-30s holiday. After a lot of market research, Traveleyes discovered that the younger traveller is looking for a destination with culture, diversity, a bit of night life but something off-the-beaten-track. The team at Traveleyes looked at what destination could offer all those things and more and announced their first 18-30s trip to Thailand which departs in November 2019!

Now offering the first ever trip where 18-30 year old sighted travellers will guide and describe the world to 18-30 year old VI travellers, this ground breaking trip will build confidence, create friendships, and help both sighted and VI travellers to see the world!

Commenting on Traveleyes' new trip concept, Amar Latif said:

“We are so excited to be able to offer younger people the chance to experience the Traveleyes concept with their own peer group. The benefit of travel for young VIs is out of this world but for a sighted traveller to experience the world along side a VI traveller is so different to how they would normally travel...it's mind blowing.

“Sighted travellers will experience the world like never before, they will be encouraged to get hands on, speak to more people and really look and evaluate what is around them, because this is how the partnership between a sighted and VI traveller works”

If you would like to speak to Traveleyes customer services, please call:
0113 834 6094

Please send all email enquiries to: info@traveleyes-international.com

Equipment and Technology

Object Recognition Apps

By J M Wiggins

I recently downloaded an object recognition app called “Aipoly Vision”, so as I now have 3 of this type of app on my phone I thought I would compare them.

The 3 apps are Taptap See, Seeing AI and Aipoly Vision. Unfortunately Seeing AI is still not available on Android devices but the other two apps are and there are several more available to you.

All 3 apps are free to use however Aipoly Vision offers a more advanced service including plant and animal species recognition and other categories if you are prepared to pay £4.99 a month. This could be useful if you are a keen gardener. (I have not used the paid subscription content in this app.)

All 3 apps will describe what your device’s camera is pointed at but they work in different ways.

Taptap See requires you to take a photo of the object then it takes a while to process the image. There is no indication that it is actually working so you just have to wait for a minute or so but its description is quite detailed. “Green grapes in plastic pack.” Seeing AI also requires you to tap the screen in order to take a photo of the object but there is an audio tone to tell you its working. It requires an internet connection in order to search its database of objects so the processing time depends on your internet speed but it is usually much quicker than Taptap See. Its descriptions are as detailed - “probably a bowl of fruit sitting on a wooden table”. Aipoly Vision has the quickest processing time as you just point the camera and listen but in my opinion because it is so fast it is mostly guessing. It saw the Green Grapes as “vegetables”. However, it did recognise a flight of stairs on every occasion by saying “Stairs, careful.”

Both Seeing AI and Aipoly Vison have a colour detector. There is nothing to choose between them as both work instantly and are reasonably accurate.

All 3 apps have their advantages so I cannot recommend one over another. TapTap See and Seeing AI can describe photographs you have stored on your device. If you have an I phone, unless you are thinking of paying for more content on Aipoly Vision then Seeing AI offers a lot more features for free. But there is nothing stopping you from using a combination of apps to cover all your needs.

I wrote a detailed review of Seeing AI in a previous issue but if you require more information please contact us at Essex Sight on 01206 548196.

Donated Items

At the Colchester Sight Centre we have a range of donated items, free for anyone who would like to collect them.

Optilec Clearview One Screen Reader

Horizon duo Merit screen Reader

Humanware Prodiiji Screen Reader

Humanware Victor Daisy Player

Cobolt TV Mouse Magnifyer

RNIB Talking Kitchen Scales

Equipment Sale

We also have a range of Talking Clocks and Watches that are ex demonstrators, all available for £5 each, which is a huge saving on the retail price.

Entertainment

Theatres (audio described performance)

[The Girl On The Train](#)

A thrilling mystery in which the lead character will face bigger revelations than she could ever have anticipated.

Theatre Royal Norwich, Saturday 6 July 2019, 2:30 pm (Touch tour 1 pm) tel:01603 63 00 00

[Tree of Dreams](#)

A theatre company of visually impaired people, presents a new family show inspired by dreams and the natural world

New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich Saturday 6 July 2019, 3:30 pm (Touch tour Contact the venue for further information) tel:01473 295900

[Matilda The Musical](#)

The story of an extraordinary little girl who, armed with a vivid imagination and a sharp mind, dares to take a stand and change her own destiny

Theatre Royal Norwich, Saturday 10 August 2019, 2:30 pm (Touch tour Contact venue for details tel:01603 63 00 00

Exhibitions

[Manga: Audio-described tour](#)

Join VocalEyes describer Lonny Evans for this live audio-described tour of the Citi exhibition Manga, which contains highlights from the largest exhibition of manga ever to take place outside of Japan.

**British Museum, London Saturday 8 June and Thursday 11 July 2019, 3:30 pm
tel: 020 7323 8971**

[The Painted Hall](#)

Following a major project to conserve the ceiling of The Painted Hall, at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, it re-opened in March with increased visitor facilities. [VocalEyes has created a recorded audio-described guide to the Hall, available on site.](#)

tel: 020 8269 4747

Science Museum Accessible Events

Viscovery Day

Sunday 9 June, 11.00 - 16.00

Viscovery Days are a series of events for families with members who are visually impaired, partially sighted or blind. Join us for a day of chemistry fun! Become a science detective in our exciting workshop, discover some marvellous mistakes in our interactive storytelling, get messy with wonderful slime, and much more! **Call 020 79424086**

Great Exhibition Road Festival - Relaxed Morning

Sunday 30 June 9.30 - 11.00

Explore the extraordinary on Exhibition Road! Over one weekend this summer, Exhibition Road will host a free festival of art, science and culture. The Imperial College 'Curiosity' Zone will hold an early opening for those who need a quieter environment to enjoy their activities. **Email festival@imperial.ac.uk**

Night Owls

Saturday 6 July, 18.30 - 22.00

Night Owls is a relaxed evening for young adults and adults (ages 16 and up only) who need a quieter environment to enjoy the Museum free of the hustle and bustle of the general public. As well as the chance to explore the galleries, there will be lots of fun workshops and exciting demonstrations to enjoy. **Call us on 020 7942 4000**

SENsory Astronights

Saturday 3 August – Sunday 4 August 2019

SENsory Astronights are a relaxed, after-dark exploration of the museum. This year we're celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first Apollo lunar landing, and you're invited to the party. From space-inspired interactive science shows and hands-on workshops you are welcome to enjoy all that Astronights has to offer in a calm environment. You'll get to snooze in one of our breath-taking galleries, wake up to a tasty breakfast and watch an IMAX 3D film. It will be a night that you will never forget.

Call us on 020 7942 4000

Activities

Metro Blind Sports

Annual Metro Athletics Open – 22nd June 2019

The Annual Metro Athletics Open are a highlight of our year. They remain the number one event for blind and partially sighted athletes, in the UK, regardless of experience. Open to everyone from juniors to veteran athletes they incorporate a comprehensive track and field programme ranging the 60m sprint to 5,000m.

Field events include the high and long jump, shot put, discus and javelin. Run in accordance with UK Athletics and International Blind Sports Association's rules by a team of qualified officials, the event is a great day out for families and many new friendships are forged.

Now in its 43rd year, Metro Blind Sport will be welcoming athletes of all ages and experience throughout the UK to join us in London for our annual competition.

Held every summer in London, blind and partially sighted athletes from all over the country attend the Annual Metro Athletics Open. Entry is now open for 43rd Annual Metro Athletics Open, being held at the Mile End Stadium in London on the 22nd June 2019.

If you haven't tried an event before and want to compete in the afternoon or are looking to improve your performance, then the Annual Metro Athletics Open is the place for you. Better still, it is FREE to attend. To enter please download and complete the entry form <http://blindsport.uk/AthleticsOpen2019>

If you would like help to complete the entry form, then please telephone Charlie on 07956292046.

The closing date for entries is Saturday 01st June 2019. Subsidised accommodation is available.

Please visit www.metroblindsport.org/sports/athletics/athletics-open/ for more details.

Book Review : The Grapes of Wrath

Reviewed by Sheila Townsend

I have had the pleasure of reading *The Grapes of Wrath* written by John Steinbeck, a Pulitzer prize winning drama first published in 1939. Set in America during the great depression, it tells the story of migrant life in Oklahoma and California. The story starts when the men with the money, the bankers and businessmen, took the land from the Croppers (so called because they made a living growing crops on a small area of land). There was more money to be made by ploughing the land and growing cotton on a large scale.

The croppers were told there was plenty of work in California and so the long trek from Oklahoma began. It is a wonderful tale of their trials and tribulations and of hardship, which they bore with great dignity. It demonstrates their courage in dealing with mans humanity and inhumanity to man. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes to read about real life. Its brilliant!

Answers to quiz

1. Margaret Thatcher
2. Maggie May
3. Margot Fonteyn
4. Margaet Cho
5. Margaret Atwood
6. Margaret Mitchell
7. Margaret Court
8. Margaret O'Brien
9. Margaret Rutherford
10. Margaret Lockwood
11. Margaret Okayo
12. Margaret Travolta
13. Margaret Beckett
14. Dame Maggie Smith
15. Maggie Reilly

Contact details

Helpline and office 01206 548196
(Jonathan Dixon, Carol Massey, Christine Pratt, Denise Sanders)

Eye Care Liaison Officers 01206 548196
Christine & Denise (Colchester + Tendring hospitals)

Read House 01255 673654
(Janet Plant, General Manager, Sandra Edwards, Admin Assistant)

Essex Blind Charity produces and distributes Spotlight free of charge. However, donations in time or money are always welcome. If you are a UK taxpayer please consider filling in our gift aid form so we can claim back the tax paid on your donation, thereby allowing us to make even better use of your donation.

If you are writing or redrafting your will please consider leaving us a gift. Your support will enable us to continue to provide and develop the services we provide for people with sight loss throughout Essex. Thank you.

Gift Aid Declaration

**On behalf of Essex Blind Charity
Registered Charity No. 1103732**

The Gift Aid Scheme enables charities to make more of your donation by reclaiming the tax you have already paid. In order for us to make this claim on your donation(s) please complete this form and return it as soon as possible

Thank you!

Please treat the enclosed gift of £.....as a Gift Aid donation.

I confirm that I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

Title.....Forename(s).....Surname.....

Address.....
.....
.....
.....

Post Code.....

I would like Essex Blind Charity to treat all donations I have made since 1 July 2012 as Gift Aid donations until I notify them otherwise.

Signature..... Date.....

Please return your completed form to:
Essex Blind Charity
Read House, 23 The Esplanade

Frinton on Sea, Essex CO13 9AU.

If you are not already on our mailing list for 'Spotlight' and would like to receive a regular copy, please complete the form below and return it to Carol Massey at Essex Sight, 40 Osborne Street, Colchester CO2 7DB

Name.....

Address.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Tel.....

How would you prefer to receive your copy?

Large Print..... Cassette Tape..... Memory Stick.....

Email.....

We would like to add your contact details to our database so that we may from time to time send you details of developments to our services, events taking place in your area and other information we feel may be of interest to you.

If you would prefer us not to do so, please tick here.....

We will not pass your details to anyone else without your permission.

You may request us to remove your details from our database at any time.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Colchester Eye Clinic contact numbers

To book or change a NEW appointment only
01206 286870 / 286871 / 286872

To enquire about or change a date for SURGERY only
01206 286874 / 286875

To book or change a FOLLOW UP appointment only
01026 286860 – Mr Sheldrick and Mr Mukherjee
01206 286863 – Mr Patel and Mr Bansal
01206 286856 – Mr Dimitriou and Mrs Gordon
01206 286769 – Mrs Shenoy

For any enquiry relating to Secondary Optometry
01206 286868

For any enquiry relating to Orthoptics
01206 286866

For the EMERGENCY EYE CLINIC only
01206 286882 – we do not accept self-referrals unless the patient is already under our care or has a pink card for the same condition.

If anyone would like to contact the department by email the address is chu-ftr.ophtalmologydepartment@nhs.net

Essex Sight Centres

Braintree

Braintree Library
Fairfield Road
Braintree CM7 3YL
3rd Wednesday of each month
10 am to 1pm

Chelmsford

Chelmsford Library
Market Road
Chelmsford CM1 1LH
Every Friday 10 am to 1 pm

Colchester

40 Osborne Street
Colchester
CO2 7DB
Open Mon - Fri 10 am to 2 pm
Wednesday late opening to 4pm

Harwich

Harwich Library
Upper Kingsway
Dovercourt CO12 3JT
2nd Tuesday alternate months
10am – 1pm

Brentwood

Brentwood Library
New Road
Brentwood CM14 4BP
2nd Monday of each month
10 am to 1 pm

Clacton-on-Sea

CADOWs
Old Road
Clacton on Sea CO15 1HX
Every Thursday 1 pm to 3.30 pm

Frinton on Sea

Read House
23 The Esplanade
Frinton-on-Sea CO13 9AU
Mon-Fri 1pm - 4.30pm (by
appointment tel: 01255 673654)

Maldon

Maldon Library, Carmelite House
White Horse Lane
Maldon CM9 5FW
1st Tuesday of each month
10am-1pm

For more information contact Essex Sight Office on 01206 548196.

Email: services@essexblind.co.uk

**For information about permanent or respite residential care, contact:
General Manager at Read House, Janet Plant: on 01255 673654**

Email: janet@essexblind.co.uk