

Essex Blind Charity



Spotlight

August 2019

ISSUE 91

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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 September 15th



The Editor writes:

Welcome to the August edition of Spotlight. This edition has two reviews of different types of glasses technology, our usual round up from around the County and a mammoth music quiz, from the very talented Darren! In fact, Darren supplied us with enough quiz material to fill the next two issues so many thanks for that. Its always great to get contributions in and if there is anything you want to have featured, then just get in touch.

The only thing I would add is that due to the way that Spotlight is printed, it can only be produced in multiples of four pages, so it is often a fine balancing act of either editing things down to fit or a frantic search for articles to fill the odd blank page!

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

Since our last edition, there have been quite a few changes in our community services, some planned and some unplanned! The Colchester Sight Centre has had its lease renewed, so with another 5 years guaranteed we took the decision to update the centre. Thanks to the Screwfix Foundation we replaced all the old fluorescent tubes with LED lights, we replaced the carpet tiles for a fraction of the price thanks to Envirocycle London Ltd and Selby Flooring supplied the toilet lino and fitted the carpet all free of charge. As part of the terms of our lease, and because it was starting to look a little scruffy, we have had all the exterior woodwork painted and we have reorganized the centre so it is less cluttered. Thanks to Colchester Catalyst, our kitchen area will be extended to allow the demonstrations to be held. If you want to learn more about kitchen gadgets or would like to get involved in showing your skills in the kitchen, please get in touch.

We received very short notice from the Library Service that we would need to renew our Library contracts and that it would now be for 6 months! We had been monitoring sight centre attendance and both Braintree and Harwich had dropped off significantly. Although we were not planning on withdrawing without notice, alas we were given no option, which was a real shock to the Braintree book group. Fortunately, our volunteer Sue Goodey stepped in and will continue the book group with the assistance of the Library staff.

Staying on the theme of sight centres, we are keen to look at alternative venues if it means we will meet more VI people, We have trialed a couple of information days at supermarkets, which have been quite successful in spreading the word about our services, but we would consider other venues, particularly in the more rural areas of the County. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

Finally, I must say a big thankyou to the team, who all pitched in during Colchester Sight Centre refurb, putting up with the noise and dust, moving furniture in and out of the centre, cleaning up many times and going above and beyond the call of duty to make sure it was not only open again on time, but looking fabulous.

Colchester Sight Centre by Carol Massey



As you will have read elsewhere in this issue of Spotlight, our Colchester Sight Centre has had something of a makeover. Thanks to the generosity of various organisations, the majority has been at virtually no cost to the Charity. If you visit our website and social media, you will see some pictures of the new look. Once the new kitchen area is ready, we will finally be able to offer food preparation workshops.

Of course, if you don't "do" the internet, then come in and see for yourself. You are very welcome to have a look around.

Oxsight came along in June to demonstrate their eyewear for people with peripheral vision loss caused by conditions such as Retinitis Pigmentosa and Glaucoma. It is an interesting piece of equipment and Graham, one of our regulars at the Sight Centre, has written a review in this issue.

In June, we had Guide Dogs come to the Sight Centre to do some "My Guide" training with our staff and volunteers. My Guide is free service that enables people with a vision impairment to get out of their homes and into the community.

With a volunteer as your sighted guide, you can overcome challenges presented by unfamiliar places or crowded areas, enjoy exploring your surroundings and ultimately become more independent. As well as promoting mobility, sighted guiding can build self-confidence and increase social interaction by:

- improving your independence, confidence and ability to get out and about
- enabling you to participate in social, leisure and fitness activities of your choice

- creating new friendships and connections in your community

The training took place over two days and everyone found it both enjoyable and a useful experience. Thanks to Martyna, Rose and Guide Dog Bramble for facilitating this.

That's it for now. I hope everyone has a lovely summer. I am off on holiday to Gloucestershire next month, so hope the weather stays fine.

Carol
carol@essexsight.org.uk

Colchester Sight Centre Activities

Weekly

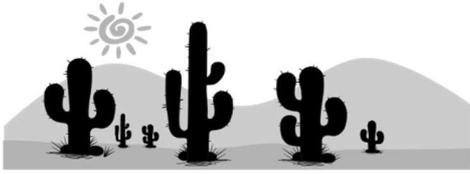
| | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| Tuesdays | 10am-12 | Coffee Morning iPad/iPhone sessions (appointment only) |
|----------|---------|---|

| | | |
|------------|---------|--|
| Wednesdays | 10am-12 | Correspondence Reading (home visiting service also available). |
|------------|---------|--|

Monthly

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----------------|
| 1 st Thursday | 10am-12n | Knitting Group |
|--------------------------|----------|----------------|

News from the Midwest by Carol Massey



**Brentwood Chelmsford
Maldon**

So, you will see that Braintree is missing at the top of this page. Sadly, after a good few years, we have finally stopped the sight centre at the library. We need to be where people are and, at the end of the day, no-one was coming to see us there. I would like to say a big thank you to Sue, our volunteer, who ran the Sight Centre with me and to Carole and the rest of the staff at Braintree Library who have always been very welcoming and helpful.

The book group is continuing and to Pat, Pat, Theresa and Sue I send this message "I will miss you all very much, I have thoroughly enjoyed our discussions and book reviews and wish all of you the very best for the future".

I have had a busy time over the last few weeks. In June I was in Brentwood for a volunteer fair and then at VolFest in Chelmsford, which is another volunteer fair. We saw lots of people, especially at Chelmsford, but interestingly, most of them wanted information about sight loss, rather than to find out about volunteering. In July, we held a low vision awareness day at Morrisons in Maldon. I wasn't sure what to expect, but once again we spoke to many people who either had sight loss themselves or knew someone who did. Many thanks to Morrisons staff who were very helpful in arranging this and helping us to set up.

By the time you read this, we will also have been at ASDA in Chelmer Village and in Brentwood for a Community Awareness Day. Our aim is to reach as many people as possible and so far, it seems to be successful.

All the above is in addition to our regular sight centres in Brentwood, Maldon and Chelmsford.

Once again, that's all for now. If you need any further information or clarification, please contact me.

Carol
carol@essexsight.org.uk

Upcoming dates for the sight centres are:

Brentwood: 2nd Monday of month 10am to 1pm
12th August, 9th September, 14th October

Chelmsford: Every Friday 10am to 1pm

Maldon: First Tuesday of month 10am to 1pm
Tuesday 6th August 3rd September, 1st October

Annual Exhibition

We will be holding our Annual Exhibition on equipment, technology & services for people with a visual impairment on:-

Wednesday 9th October from 10am to 2pm
at

Firstsite, Lewis Gardens, Colchester CO1 1JH

Entry is free, so come along and find out about the products and services available from British Wireless Fund for the Blind, Dolphin Enhanced Vision, Humanware, Optelec, Oxsight, Professional Vision, Sight and Sound, Synapptic and more!

Spotlight On

Orcam MyEye 1.8

The OrCam consists of a small camera which is attached by two magnets on either side of a pair of glasses. As I use a guide dog, I have the OrCam on my right. There is a cable leading from the camera down to the battery and main controls. You can either carry this in your handbag or pocket (although the latest version has it all built into the camera).

The camera has one control which allows you to wake it up when it goes into suspend mode. This can be set by the user within the main menu. The battery can be charged direct from the mains with a mains charger or a usb phone charger. As I use it a lot, I purchased a portable battery charger, for £26 from Amazon. There are three buttons on the main control box. On/off. Volume and menu. There is also a socket for earphones.

Simple to navigate, the voice driven menu includes speed of voice, choice of voice, date/time, facial recognition, product reception and barcodes.

I have had the OrCam MyEye for some months now and have found it to be an excellent piece of equipment. Like a lot of technology, it can also be frustrating, so approach it with patience. It takes time to get used to using it, however when you get it right it is brilliant. You have that menu, that book or even just a receipt in your hand and you can read it, so to speak. You can either use Automatic or manual speech, I started by using automatic, now I switch between the two. The facial recognition is good, I have several people saved and there is room for 100 faces.

I find it very useful when shopping except in poor light. Barcodes were okay as long as they were main brands.

Overall. I found this to be a very useful piece of equipment for those who are registered Severely Sight Impaired/Blind.

Rose (One Girl and her Dogs xx)

Tendring Talks by Denise Sanders



Deafblind UK Event at Read House

It was Deafblind awareness week from 24th to 29th June. We all know fresh air and gentle exercise can help us to reduce stress and anxiety, sharpen short-term memory and help us concentrate better. At times, the everyday challenges of deafblindness can leave you feeling a little low. So, where could be better to celebrate the week than at Read House in Frinton-on-Sea!

Deafblind UK picked Saturday 29th June for their event and it was a great day to feel great again, taking in the lovely sea air and enjoying the fine weather in the gardens of Read House with entertainment provided as well!

The only sad note was that this was Emma from Deafblind UK's last event. We would like to wish Emma all the best in her future career.

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.

Sadly, over the next few weeks we will be saying goodbye to two very loyal, long-serving members of staff. Elaine Anderson is one of our domestic assistants and has been working at Read House and, previously, 'the blind homes' since 1994 and will be retiring to spend more time with her husband. We wish her many years of happy retirement.

And many of you will know Sandra Edwards, our admin assistant at Read House. Sandra has been my right hand man (woman?) since 2002 and I in particular, and everyone at Read House, will miss her as she retires at the end of August. Sandra has always been the 'go to' person for residents, their families and staff alike when they have a problem or an issue they need resolved. We hope she has many years to enjoy her garden and her family and to spend the summers on the beach with her book.

We have appointed Tina Cox as our new administrator. Tina is already working at Read House as our Activities Co-ordinator and will be continuing some aspects of that role such as planning the activities programme and producing the residents' newsletter (available on the Read House website www.readhouse.org). We hope Tina will be happy in her new role.

Janet Plant

Quiz

General Music Quiz

1. Of which band was Justin Timberland a member before launching his solo career?
2. Which band featured Beyonce Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams?
3. Which group had '70s hits with September and Boogie Wonderland?
4. What nationality were Ottoman, who had a hit in 1980 with D.I.S.C.O?
5. Which hit song of 1980 by The Police begins: 'Young teacher the subject of schoolgirl fantasy'?
6. What is the name of Eminem's band?
7. Which rap star's real name is Sean Coombs?
8. On which television program did Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera and Justin Timberlake appear together?
9. What was the title of the only hit for the Charlie Daniels Band?
10. Who wrote the song, 'They didn't believe me'?
11. Which hit of the 60s begins: 'We skipped the light fandango'?
12. Who sang lead vocals on Python Lee Jackson's 1972 hit 'In a Broken Dream'?
13. Which Dave Clark Five hit begins: 'You say that you love me'?
14. Who composed the theme to the television series Inspector Morse?
15. Complete the group name: Archie Bell and ...

Equipment and Technology

Oxsight experience at Colchester Sight Centre – Graham Stearn

Oxsight have developed smart glasses which give people with a visual impairment (peripheral vision loss) the chance to enhance their vision allowing them to see more around them.

In 2010 the founding members of the team at Oxsight at Oxford University worked closely with the low vision community researching how the brain manages visual information.

After working closely in partnership with leading global players from sight impaired communities and the technology sector including Google, RNIB, Guide Dogs and many more, Oxsight are now running clinics and events to demonstrate their product.

I attended the Colchester sight centre to try this device. I was extremely shocked when they changed different settings and focused on objects that perhaps I wouldn't normally be able to see without moving or turning my head. I was facing the window at the centre and normally I would only see a very low amount, as I have a very low field of vision, however when I was wearing these glasses, I was able to make out the full window and even along to the side and identify objects inside the centre. This device had several different settings allowing you to change background colour schemes when looking at objects or reading text, you could choose how you focused and how you displayed the item you may have been focusing on or reading.

Be prepared, this technology isn't cheap, but if you think it can improve your vision and you have money in the bank then give it a go - Ed.

For more information about this device and to see where they are doing demonstration check out their website at <https://www.oxsight.co.uk/> or look at Social media

https://www.facebook.com/pg/OXSIGHT/about/?ref=page_internal where you can see reviews and videos of how people have used this product.

Entertainment

Theatres (audio described performance)

Matilda The Musical

Theatre Royal Norwich, Saturday 10 August 2019, 2:30 pm

One Man, Two Guvnors

New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich Tuesday 10 September 2019, 12:00 am – Saturday 28 September 2019, 12:00 am (Touch tour Saturday 14th of September at 1.30pm and Thursday 19th of September at 6.45pm)

A Taste of Honey

Theatre Royal Norwich, Saturday 16 November 2019, 2:30 pm

These are just a few of the more local events, for a more comprehensive listing of London and UK wide arts and heritage events contact

VocalEyes on 020 7375 1043 or visit the website <https://vocaleyeyes.co.uk/>

Donated Items

We currently have the following donated items available free for anyone who would like to collect them.

Optilec Clearview Video Magnifier

Humanware ProDiji Video Magnifier with Speech

Horizon Duo Merit Video Magnifier

Humanware Victor Daisy player

Hanson Large Display Bathroom Scales

Answers to quiz

Answers

1. N*Sync
2. Destiny's Child
3. Earth Wind and Fire
4. French
5. 'Don't Stand So Close To Me'
6. D-12
7. P Diddy
8. Mickey Mouse Club
9. The Devil Went Down to Georgia
10. Jerome Kern
11. 'A Whiter Shade of Pale' (Procol Harum)
12. Rod Stewart
13. 'Glad All Over'
14. Barrington Pheloung
15. The Drells

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

Brentwood

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

Chelmsford

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

Clacton-on-Sea

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

Colchester

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

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@essexsight.org.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