

# Look Out!

## March 2024



## Halifax Society for the Blind Newsletter

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Lookout!

Inside you will find some exciting news....

You will also find details of this year's Walking Group, an article about some new additions to our sight centre and much more.

We hope you enjoy catching up with what has been going on at HSB and finding out what is coming up.

Kind Regards

The HSB Team



Faye Herbert  
Chief Officer



Luke Spink  
Sight Support Advisor



Jane Sellers  
Sight Support Advisor



Tina Twibill  
Activities Coordinator



Brittany Herbert  
Office Support Assistant



Damian MacCallum  
Engagement Officer

# Welcome to the Team

Office Support Assistant: Brittany Herbert

My name is Brittany, and I am the new Office Support Assistant. This means I will be working alongside the rest of the team to help in any way I can and support the organisation to continue delivering services.

You may have spoken to me on the phone recently as I have been completing the surveys with you all to get some feedback following the recent move to Southgate! I have really enjoyed making these calls and getting to know you all and I look forward to meeting you in person in the near future.



Hello

My name is Damian Maccallum, I am the new Engagement Officer at Halifax Society for the Blind. I start my new role in April 2024 and I am really

looking forward to joining the team and supporting members of our community living with sight loss. My role is to engage with new and current members, develop friendships with external community groups and services as well as bring fresh ideas to the team to help this amazing charity keep growing into the future.

I have lived with sight loss since being diagnosed at 18 with Retinitis pigmentosa. I hope my lived experience of sight loss can help me deliver support and guidance to others living with a visual impairment. Living with sight loss has taught me many things, the main thing being that no matter how much vision you have you can still do amazing things and create lasting memories.



# Lift update and Taster Day

We have some exciting news!

We are pleased to be able to tell you that the lift is now working.

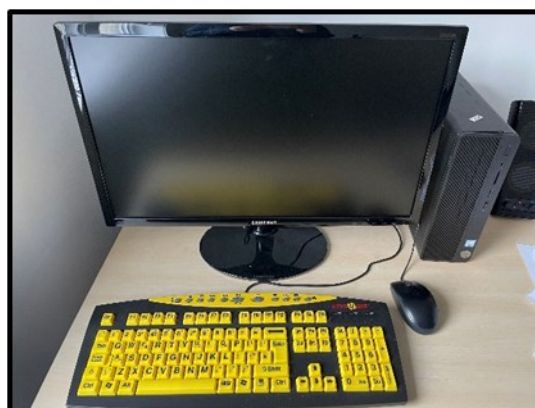
To mark this significant event, we are holding a Taster Day on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April from 10am to 2pm.**

If you haven't managed to visit our new premises yet, this is a great opportunity to come along and sample all there is to offer. On the ground floor our Sight Centre is brimming with daily living aids, shades, and equipment. The front room gives you a chance to explore entertainment options in a home environment and the social café will be open and offering refreshments.

The first floor will have stalls showcasing taster sessions for some of our current groups and activities. If you have ever wondered what we get up to in our craft group or what games we play in our games group, now is your chance to come along and find out!

The Tech Studio will be accessible and open for you to try out.

We really hope to see you on the day. If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact the office on 01422 352383.



## Walking Group!

Last year we launched our Walking Group, and it was a huge success. This year we have decided to extend the number of walks and the programme is below.

We try to visit places which are of an easy to moderate level so that they are accessible to most people. All the walks start at 10.30am.

On most walks there is the option to either call somewhere for lunch or bring your own picnic.

If you would like to join us for any of our walks, please book via the office on 01422 352383. We may be able to offer transport if required but please make sure you contact us with enough notice for us to arrange this.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Walk</b>	<b>Difficulty</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Meeting Place</b>
19th March 2024	From Cromwell Bottom to Brighthouse along the canal	Easy	Toilets at both ends. Bring your own picnic or venue at Brighthouse	Cromwell Bottom car park
16th April 2024	Judy Woods	Easy	The Old Beare Pub or bring your own picnic Toilets available	Meet at the Old Bear car park
14th May 2024	Yorkshire Sculpture Park	Easy to moderate	YSP café or bring your own picnic	Meeting point to be confirmed. There will be an entrance fee and a minibus charge
18th June 2024	Jerusalem Farm	Moderate	Picnic only. Toilets available	Meet at Jerusalem Farm car park
16th July 2024	Hardcastle Craggs	Easy to moderate	Café or bring your own picnic. Toilets available	Meet at Hardcastle Craggs car park
20th August 2024	Blackstone Edge	Easy	The White House Inn or bring your own picnic. Toilets available	Meet at the car park below the White House pub car park.



Date	Walk	Difficulty	Facilities	Meeting Place
3rd September	Ripponden Circular	Moderate	The Bridge in or bring your own picnic. Toilets available.	Meet at the Mill Fold pub car park
9th October 2024	Norland Moor	Moderate	The Hub or bring your own picnic. Toilets available.	Meet at Norland Moor Car Park
26th November 2024	Meet at Halifax Society for the Blind for coffee and catch up			
10th December 2024	Christmas lunch to be confirmed			



## Low Vision Clinic

The staff team are going to be spending some time visiting the Low Vision Clinic to improve our knowledge and awareness around the services they provide.

We will then be able to cascade this information down to you and make sure that the magnifiers we can provide supplement the ones on offer at the clinic.



## Groups and Activities Round Up

We have had lots of exciting things going on in our groups and activities, from bingo to indoor darts, domino competitions to gonk making, knitting to chairbics, not to mention the visits to the pub it's all been happening!

Our groups and activities are for anyone with sight loss. There is a small charge to attend. You are welcome to bring a family member, friend or carer with you if you choose.



One of our attendees recently said about our groups “you know you are among friends, it’s a good place to come” (David H.)

If you fancy coming along to see what we do and join in you would be more than welcome. There is plenty of room for everyone!

Further on in the newsletter you will find our full programme of activities. If you require any support with anything, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do our best to help.



## NEW Products in the Sight Centre

In the Sight Centre, our biggest aim is to provide members with the widest selection possible. With this in mind, we now have a new range of magnifiers available! Find out more below:

### Eschenbach Mobilent LED

We have 3 different kinds of these magnifiers, a 4x, 7x and 10x. This small round magnifier is perfect for fitting in your pocket or purse and taking out and about with you!



### Eschenbach easyPOCKET

Another type of magnifier for on the go, these rectangular magnifiers equipped with an LED light, handy for restaurant menus and tags in the supermarket. We currently stock a grey x4, and white x6.



### Eschenbach Makro LUX

This magnifier comes in with either a removeable LED light, or none at all. Both are x2.2 magnification and perfect for reading newspapers and letters.



### Eschenbach Menas LUX

With a flat base and aspheric lens, this magnifier has a magnification of x3 and a built-in LED light. Useful for on flat surfaces in a poorly lit environment.



### Eschenbach Scribolux

This unique standing magnifier with an in-built LED light magnifies by x2.8 with a distance between the stand and the magnifier. This is to allow room for writing, or careful hand work such as threading a needle.



This is a small sample of the magnifiers available in the Sight Centre. For more information and to try some of the items yourself, you can visit from 10:00am-2:00pm Monday to Friday.



## Volunteer Corner

Hi Members and volunteers,

It's Wanda here, one of the volunteers. I have been a volunteer at HSB now for about 6 months and thoroughly enjoy my time there.

Having given up my 9-5 a couple of years ago, I felt I would like to give some time to volunteering and chose the HSB.

Since starting I have had various roles, all enjoyable in different ways, so pretty varied really. They have ranged from serving teas & coffees in our lovely Social Cafe, where I have met many members and other volunteers.

Just recently I have been taking part in our 'Surveys to Members', phoning and asking for their opinions of our new premises in Southgate and generally asking for feedback and thoughts for future activities. It's been really interesting and enjoyable.

Helping out at our Christmas Fair was good fun, helping to guide members around the fab varied stalls that day and making sure everyone was well 'tea and coffee'd'. There was a great camaraderie between the Staff and Volunteers to help make the day the success that it was.

I'm finding Volunteering to be very rewarding and enjoyable, engaging with Staff and Volunteers alike, and helping generally where I can.





## Halifax Society for the Blind Poem

Below is a poem written by one of our members that we wanted to share with you.

Being blind doesn't define me.  
Love is for everyone.  
Inspiration  
No negativity  
Don't judge people just from their looks.  
S is for a safe place to go  
O is for the opportunities the centre brings  
C is for the cafe we meet and chat  
I is for individuality  
Everybody is different.  
T is for the togetherness  
You are always welcome with open arms.

Just put them together and they spell:

Blind Society

A place we all love to come for help and a chat.  
Teresa K.

## Friends on the Phone

The recent survey we have undertaken has shown that there are some of our members who feel a bit isolated either due to sight loss or mobility issues so we wanted to make you all aware that our Friends on the Phone befriending service is available.

This service is for anyone, with sight loss, who feels they would enjoy a regular chat with one of our lovely volunteers.

Maybe you have read about our groups and activities but are unable to attend. Friends on the Phone could help you feel like you are receiving support from the comfort of your own home.

If you would like to register your interest. Please contact the office on 01422 352383 or email [info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk).

We look forward to hearing from you.



## Activities Timetable

**Bowling Group** - Every Friday at Electric Bowl Halifax from 11am.

**Brighthouse Group** - Every Monday at Brighthouse Rest Centre from 12.30pm–2.30pm.

**Chairobics** - Every Friday (hybrid) 10am-10.30am.

**Coffee and Chat Group** - Every Wednesday at HSB from 2pm-4pm.

**Craft Group** – 1<sup>st</sup> and 3rd Thursday of every month at HSB 12.30pm - 2.30pm.

**Games Group** - Every Thursday at HSB from 10am-11.30am. Why not make a day of it on a Thursday and for £5 join us for our games group, followed by a light lunch and then you can get creative at our craft group

**Guide Dog Owner Group** – a chance for current, past, and potential guide dog owners to catch up and share their experiences, have a chat and a coffee on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 11am to 12pm at HSB.

**Inbetweeners** – This is our rebranded Working Age Group held on the 4th Thursday of every month at HSB 6pm – 8pm. Chat, share hints and life experiences with fellow working age members.

**Social Café and Sight Centre**– our social engagement café and Sight Centre is now open Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm. Pop along and see us for a brew and a bun! Appointments can be made outside these hours, please contact the office if you would like to arrange a suitable time.

**Technology Group**– 1st Wednesday of every month at 11am, a hybrid (on Zoom and/or in person at HSB) group discussing different relevant technology.

**Theatre Group** – Are you interested in a trip to the theatre? If so, look no further!

**Walking Group**– Once a month with a different location every month.





# Contact HSB

Call: 01422 352383

Email: [info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk)

Write: 7 Southgate, Halifax, HX1 1DL

Website: [www.halifaxblindsociety.org.uk](http://www.halifaxblindsociety.org.uk)

## How to Join Our Zoom Sessions

To join, you can use one of these options:

- On a computer or smartphone, click this link <https://zoom.us/j/9683947679> or
- on any phone, dial 0131 460 1196, then enter the meeting ID 968 394 7679, then press hash #. If asked for a participant ID just press hash # again and you're in! Or;
- Save the one tap mobile below exactly as shown onto your smartphone and use it each time to join our Zoom sessions on the phone  
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