

Look Out!

February 2024



Halifax Society for the Blind Newsletter

Hello, and welcome to the latest edition of *Lookout!*

Read on to catch up on all the activities that took place in the lead up to Christmas. Also, make sure you have your diaries at the ready so you can mark in all the exciting events coming up over the next quarter.

Remember, if you would prefer to receive any of our publications in audio or email format, all you have to do is contact the office to let us know.

Kind Regards

The HSB Team

Opening Times

The Sight Centre and Social Engagement Café area is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm. You are welcome to drop in between these times to view the wide range of daily living aids and equipment on display, seek technical support or general advice and guidance or simply call in for a brew and a chat.

Appointments can be arranged outside of these hours if required, we can also offer home visits for those who are unable to access our centre, Please call the office for further details or to make alternative arrangements.

The Staff Team

Faye Herbert: Chief Officer

Luke Spink: Senior Engagement Officer

Jane Sellers: Sight Support Advisor

Tina Twibill: Activities Coordinator

Damian MacCallum: Engagement Officer

Brittany Herbert: Office Support Assistant

Christmas RoundUp

Christmas Fair

None of the planning for the Christmas Fair could have prepared us for waking up to the most snowfall we have seen in years! However, we did not let this deter us, staff, volunteers and stall holders bravely battled their way in.

Although it was a bit of a slow start, as the day went on and the weather improved we got a good flow of visitors through the doors.

With delicious homemade cakes, beautiful handcrafted gifts and Father Christmas himself, the Christmas spirit was soon in full swing.

We would like to thank everyone who helped to make the day the success it was and help raise around £700. This money went a long way towards covering the costs of our Christmas events.

Volunteer Christmas Meal

On Wednesday 4th December, 18 of our lovely volunteers gathered to celebrate 2024 with a meal at Café Passion. Our volunteers work very hard in their volunteering roles to support the smooth running of groups and activities so it was great to see so many of them come along, relax and enjoy themselves in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

The Turkish menu offered something for everyone and the food, as always, was delicious.

There are never enough ways to thank our wonderful volunteers for their time and dedication. They all deserve a medal!

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the office for more information on our volunteering opportunities.

Member Christmas Meal

51 members descended on the Stump Cross Inn on Tuesday 10th December to enjoy some scrumptious Christmas Fayre ranging from traditional carvery to pan fried sea bream.

The talented Julie Diamond joined us after our meal and set the tone for the Christmas festivities. Members soon got involved singing along and dancing.

Once the singing was finished, we drew the Christmas Raffle. There are too many prizes to list here but rest assured, if you were lucky enough to have your number drawn, we will have been in touch.

A huge thank you to the staff at the Stump Cross Inn who were amazing, making us all feel very welcome. Thanks also to Community Transport Calderdale who once again provided a fabulous door to door transport service.

Christmas Photos



Locality Peer Support Groups

We are thrilled to announce that from March we will be offering peer support groups within each of the localities.

These new groups will take place once a month in a different locality each month including Sowerby Bridge, Elland, Illingworth and Shelf.

Taking place at local cafes and pub's these groups will provide an opportunity to develop friendships locally within the sight loss community.

There will be a member of staff present to facilitate the group, so please come along and join us. If you would like any further details, contact Damian at the office.

Groups will be as follows:

The first Monday of every month 11am at Morrisons Café, Elland.

The second Tuesday of every month 2pm at Morrisons Café, Illingworth.

The third Monday of every month 11am at the Moorings, Sowerby Bridge.

The fourth Tuesday of every month 2pm at The Duke of York, Shelf.

New Trading Name!

The moment has arrived to consider adopting a “working name” for the charity. Rest assured, this will not affect our official name, which will remain unchanged. Instead, the working name will serve as a more accessible and recognisable identity by which we will be known moving forward.

You may recall that during our member survey, we invited your suggestions for potential working names. We are now reaching out to you for your valued input in selecting from the options below.

To cast your vote, please email us at info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk or call our office at **01422 352383**. Your participation is greatly appreciated as we shape the next chapter of our journey together.

Working names options:

- Valley Vision
- Sight Support Calderdale
- Sight Calderdale
- CalderEyes

Whats coming up

Brighthouse Coffee and Chat Group.

Every Monday at the Brighthouse Rest Centre from 12.20pm to 2.30pm join us for fun and games. Refreshments provided. £2 per person.

Breakfast Group

Every Wednesday at 7 Southgate, Halifax from 10am to 12noon join us for a breakfast sandwich followed by a different group each week. £5 per person (£2 if you only attend the group session)

1st Wednesday of the month: Technology Group. In February there will be a demonstration of the SuperNova software. In March there will be a demonstration of the Dolphin Software.

2nd Wednesday of every month: Companion Group. A peer support group for friends, family and carers of those living with a visual impairment.

3rd Wednesday of every month: Guide Dogs Group. A chance for guide dog owners past, present and future to chat about living with a guide dog.

4th Wednesday of every month: Focus Group. Each month focussing on a different eye condition. In February we will be discussing Glaucoma and in March we will be discussing Nystagmus.

Knit and Natter

Every Wednesday from 12noon to 2pm we have the Knit and Natter Group. This is a drop in session for knitters of any level.

Halifax Coffee and Chat Group

Every Wednesday at 7 Southgate from 2pm to 4pm join us for fun and games. Refreshments provided. £2 per person.

SocialEyes

Every Thursday from 10.30am to 2pm at 7 Southgate. February sessions include 6th Feb: Chocolate Heaven, 13th Feb: All about Love, 20th Feb Fuel and Flourish and 27th Feb Nostalgia League. £10 per person including lunch.

Inbetweeners

4th Thursday of every month at 7 Southgate, Halifax from 6pm to 8pm.

On 27th February we will be hosting a fairground themed session, come along and enjoy all the fun of the fair indoors in the warmth!

On 27th March we will be visiting Vocation for a slice of pizza and to sample some of the best beer around.

Bowling Group

Every Friday at Electric Bowl, Halifax from 11am.

Please contact the office for further details on any of our groups.

Ladies Night

A Perfect Cure for the Winter Blues!

Join us on **Friday, 28th February** for an unforgettable **Ladies' Night Fundraiser**, an evening dedicated to fun, creativity, and connection.

Whether you're looking to shake off those winter blues or simply enjoy a fabulous night out, this event promises something special for every guest.

What's in store for you?

- **Prosecco Welcome:** Begin your evening in style with a complimentary glass of chilled prosecco on arrival.
- **Floral Creativity:** We are thrilled to be joined by the fabulous **April and Lisa** from **Earththings Florist** who will guide us through an inspiring flower-arranging session. Each person who attends will be given a raffle ticket, the draw will take place at the end of the evening and the luck winner will receive the completed arrangement.
- **Delicious Refreshments:** Savour a selection of refreshments available throughout the night.
- **Clothes Swap Stall:** Refresh your wardrobe with our unique clothes swap stall! Choose some new treasures for your wardrobe while giving your pre-loved pieces a new home.

Gather your friends, family, or come solo and make new connections during this uplifting and entertaining evening. All proceeds go towards supporting our cause, so you'll be having fun while making a difference.

- **Location:** 7 Southgate, Halifax, HX1 1DL
- **Time:** 6.30pm to 9pm
- **Tickets:** £20 per person, tickets are available from the office.

Mark your calendars for a night to remember. Tell all your friends and family. We can't wait to see you there!

Any good quality pre-loved ladies clothes that you would like to donate to the clothes stall can be brought into the office now.



Low Vision Roadshow



Product Demonstration & Advice Day
Monday 14th April 2025 10am to 3pm

We will be holding a products clinic in conjunction with



7 Southgate, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX1 1DL

Covering all areas of sight loss. Meet with our experienced consultant and ask any questions you may have. Try out a variety of different products and technology to aid you in your day to day activities.

Come along and explore the latest products and technologies for blind and partially sighted people.

At all of our events you can get hands-on-experience, of our latest products. With an experienced consultant on hand to give you advice and answer any questions you may have.

If you are unable to attend this date we do provide FREE home demonstrations on most products.

NEW

“Solutions for all conditions of visual impairment”



Further information can be found at
www.lowvisionshop.co.uk

Ruby 10 HD

Route 66 Walking Challenge

Embark on an Epic Journey with Halifax Society for the Blind!

This winter, we're trading gloomy weather for sunshine and adventure by taking on the Virtual Route 66 Walking Challenge—and we need *you* to join us!

Together, our incredible team of staff, members, and volunteers will virtually conquer the iconic Route 66. By participating, you'll not only help us complete this epic journey but also raise essential funds to continue supporting people living with sight loss in Calderdale.

We're calling on 50 passionate individuals to step up and walk 50 miles in 50 days, raising at least £50 each for Halifax Society for the Blind. It's a challenge with a purpose—and we can't do it without you!

Here's what you need to know:

- The first 25 participants to sign up will receive a FREE t-shirt to celebrate the journey.
- A £15 sign-up fee covers costs, but this can be refunded upon completing the challenge!
- Walking isn't just great for the cause—it's fantastic for *you*! Fresh air, exercise, and the chance to embrace a healthier lifestyle are just some of the benefits awaiting you.

So, what are you waiting for? Join us and help spread the word! Let's make this adventure unforgettable and continue making a difference.

Sign up today and step into an amazing challenge that truly matters!



Donation News

Hop In Halifax very kindly raffled a hamper containing a number specialist beers and snacks they have available in their shop, before Christmas to support Halifax Society for the Blind. The raffle raised an amazing £150! Hop In was established in 2023 by proud owners Nick and Karen. The shop and micro bar sells local and international produce and specifically focuses on supporting small breweries.

Nick and Karen have a close connection with Halifax Society for the Blind as Nick's mum Jacky is one of our lovely volunteers. Jacky was also the person that came up with the business name.

Hop In is located at 18 Union Street, and there is always a warm welcome for any visitors whether you are popping in to browse the range of beers, ciders, wines and spirits available or have decided to "hop in" for a beer and friendly chat. Dogs are also welcome. Hop In is closed Mondays and Tuesday but open from 11am other days.



Donation News Continued

Over the last 12 months Andrea and the team at Co-Op, Hipperholme have been quietly supporting Halifax Society for the Blind, raising money in a variety of ways including through an Open Day and car washing event.

Andrea and the Co-Op became involved in supporting Halifax Society for the Blind as Andrea has been neighbours with one of our members, Doreen for over 30 years and has seen the difference HSB has made to Doreen's life since she started attending our groups and activities.

Most recently, Andrea and Doreen have worked in collaboration to produce some festive angels. Doreen made the bodies of the angels and Andrea trimmed them up with laces dresses, halo's and wings.

The completed angels were then put on display for the public to make donation at the Co-Op.

Altogether, Andrea and the team have raised over £600 which is absolutely amazing and goes a long way to supporting the continuation of our services.

Doreen explained,

“Losing your sight makes you deteriorate because you can't see what you want to see and its frustrating. People don't understand how difficult it is.”

Andrea added

“ I have seen such a difference in Doreen, it has been life changing for her. She has a better social life than anyone now! Halifax Society for the Blind is such a worthy cause, it is amazing what you do.”



Yoga Taster Sessions

We would like to remind you about the exciting opportunity we have coming up with Turtle Yoga. We will be offering a 4 week taster yoga experience in the New Year.

Turtle Yoga is run by Helen Mackintyre. Helen has 7 years experience, teaching generally Hatha yoga, as well as pregnancy and kids yoga.

Yoga has many benefits, including improving your physical and emotional health. Yoga can also help you relax and sleep better as well as increasing your mental and physical energy and enthusiasm.

Whether you are a regular yogi or a complete novice you will be welcome to join with confidence.

There will be a £6 charge per person.

There has already been a lot of interest in these sessions and places are limited so this is your last chance to register your interest and book a spot.

Volunteer Corner

My name is Susan, after a career in secretarial administration and credit control positions, I retired at 60 to retrain as a Level 3 Teaching Assistant for an incredibly rewarding 10 years. Still having the desire to communicate I was interested to see the CTNA was looking for volunteers. I joined the administration team up until the office closure in the pandemic.

During Covid, HSB put out a request for Friend on the Phone volunteers and I was rewarded with a lovely gentleman with whom I had a very special relationship until his sad passing. I have a new Friend now, a lovely lady. Anyone who knows me knows I love to chat so this is and helping out at social and fundraising events is an ideal volunteering role.

I have also narrated articles for the Calderdale Eye and was interviewed by the Queens Award panel.

I have met some incredibly kind and interesting members and volunteers. This experience is rewarding, fulfilling and has enriched my life.



LEO Group

On Thursday 20th February, the Local Eating Out group will be visiting Café Passion. If you would like to join us for friendly chat and to share ideas for living with sight loss, please email localeatingout@outlook.com or call Angela on 07791134362 for more information.

Contact HSB

If you wish to contact the HSB team to book onto any of our groups or activities, find out more information, seek advice or make an appointment please contact the office vis any of the options listed below.

Call: 01422 352383

Email: info@halifaxblindsociety.org.uk

Write: 7 Southgate, Halifax, HX1 1DL

Looking to make a difference? Donate Now!

Scan the QR code or visit our website
[www.halifaxblindsociety.org.uk/
donations](http://www.halifaxblindsociety.org.uk/donations)

Alternatively you can call into the office
with a cash or cheque donation.

