



SIGHT MATTERS

Optic Topics

Issue 36

Spring 2022



I think the smiles say it all!!!

Recently, our younger members group spent a supervised three-day staycation at Silverdale; one of the staff attending said that **'if laughter was a measure of the holiday's success then it really was a case of mission accomplished!'**

The first evening group headed to Port Erin Chippy Diner for tea. The evening finished with hot chocolate with cream and marshmallows, a quiz and a movie back at the lodge.

Up early the next day, they headed to the Sound Cafe for a full English breakfast which set them up for the day! They visited the control tower at the airport then attended the Craft Works in Castletown to paint the pottery of their choice. That evening, they enjoyed a meal at the Whitestone Pub before retiring to the lodge for a film, bingo and refreshments.

The final morning, the sleepy members managed to get up to enjoy their breakfast at Silverdale before heading home for some well-earned rest!

Lots of activities are planned for the club in the next few months including cup cake decorating, Tenpin Bowling, a trip to the goat farm, a trip to the

Wildlife Park and a family afternoon tea.





Annual General Meeting

Manx Blind Welfare's (Sight Matters) AGM, which was postponed on Wednesday 23 March, will now be held on **Tuesday 26th April at 3.30pm at Corrin Court**

Website

We have updated our website in line with our rebranding. Take a look at www.Sightmatters.im. Let us know your thoughts!

Over 18's Activities

Thanks to all who have responded to the activities to be considered as part of a programme for this year. We have started with the delivery of some of the most popular and will continue to develop the programme. Unfortunately, we received a number of responses that did not include a name. If you have completed a form and aren't certain whether you put your name on the response sheet or not, please contact Cathryn BRADLEY on cbradley@sightmatters.im or Clare GOLDIE on cgoldie@sightmatters.im or on 674727.

Amateur radio club

We know we have a number of radio enthusiast members and we are scoping out interest to see if there's interest in setting up an amateur radio



All these activities are provided free of charge. If you would like to sponsor the activity club, please let us know!

club for our members. Are you interested? If so, please contact Cathryn BRADLEY on cbradley@sightmatters.im or Dave WILSON on dwilson@sightmatters.im or on 6724727.

Tree planting



Members and their families recently helped the Woodland Trust plant 150 trees in Andreas.

Home visits by opticians

A gap in the provision of home visits by Opticians has been highlighted in that there is currently only one Optician providing home visits and the waiting list for a visit is significant. We are liaising with Primary Care who commission these services to address the gap. Primary Care would like to know the extent of the actual problem. Please contact Cathryn Bradley on 674727 or via email cbradley@sightmatters.im if you have experienced issues and she will collate and feedback to Manx Care on your behalf.

Smoke Detectors

The IOM Fire and Rescue Service provide and fit smoke detectors free of charge. We would encourage you to take up this service. Please contact Cathryn BRADLEY on 674727 or via email cbradley@sightmatters.im should you wish to have a smoke detector fitted.

Open day

We held an Awareness Open Day on Friday 18th March targeting professionals that may work with or encounter those with sight loss or visual impairment as part of their

working day. It was well attended, we had MHK'S, MLC's and professionals from statutory services and other charities. There was genuine interest, and surprise, at the range of services that we provide. The tangible benefit of the Open Day is already being seen as referrals for access to our services have already been received. Huge thanks go to the members and volunteers who supported us on the day. As with much of what we do, it could not have been achieved without such help.

Signature Guides

Our signature guides can help a blind or visually impaired person to sign their name. These are available for members at Sight Matters.



Coast 2 Coast

On Sunday 4th September Coast 2 Coast is back and we hope it will be bigger and better! The walk which starts at the NSC in Douglas continues along the railway track finishing in

Peel. Look out on our website or Facebook page for more details

Visual Awareness Training



Sight Matters provide free specialist visual awareness training to help organisations to understand some of the challenges that sight loss has on people's lives. The course is designed to help them engage appropriately with visually impaired customers.

Recently we held a session at Lloyds Bank. They said:

'It's important to us that we have the skills and knowledge to support all our customers, whatever their individual needs, to make banking as accessible as possible.'

Last week Isle of Man colleagues were fortunate to receive some truly insightful Visual Impairment Awareness Training from local charity Sight Matters.'

If this is something you are interested in, please contact us.

The VIP Store



We are in the process of changing our seasonal stock over to spring/summer. With the weather warming up, is it time for you to have a wardrobe sort out? We sell good quality ~~woman's~~, women's, men's and children's wear as well as bric-a-brac.

We are always looking for all types of donations but in particular at present, we would love donations of old wooden trouser hangers, bow ties and braces!

We are located in Strand Street, Douglas and open Monday – Saturday 10.30am– 4pm

Unwanted Gifts

A huge thank you to Shoprite for collecting unwanted Christmas presents at their Victoria Road store and donating them to us! The gifts will be used as raffle prizes or sold in our charity shop.



Luncheon Club Fun



Inspector Bobby Syme certainly looked like he made the ladies day whilst visiting the luncheon clubs. Not sure if he got his hat back?

Donation Stations

Would you like to donate without leaving your office? Why not try one of our donation stations. The 85 centimetre-tall freestanding cardboard collection points are available free to any business which would like to make it easier for staff to donate to charity. The Society will deliver the donation station and can pick up donations whenever required.



If you would like more information please contact the Centre on 674727.

Events



Our new funding arm Manninsight, had their first fundraising event at Bonds restaurant in Onchan on Friday 4th March. The theme was 'Mardi Gras' and all the guests arrived with some wonderful masks.

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It was a very successful evening with amazing food and entertainment. The attention to details was exceptional, from the appealing invitation through to the menu choice.

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Thanks go to the committee for all their hard work.



Photo shows the Manninsight committee along with the Chairman, CEO and Treasurer of Sight Matters.

Volunteering

Sight Matters have lots of volunteering opportunities. Some include:

- Reception at Sight Matters
- Fundraising
- Driving/escorting members
- Helping in the luncheon clubs
- Roles within our weekly news service
- Working in our charity shop in Douglas



If you would like some more information or would like to volunteer, please contact us on enquiries@sightmatters.im or 674727

Volunteer Profile by Ruth Duddy

'Sight Matters relies on full time staff plus a team of volunteers. I am lucky enough to be a volunteer and started a few months ago on the reception desk - Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning. That entails answering the 'phone and putting calls through - as of now I don't think I have cut anyone off! Apologies if I have. In addition, I have helped in the library, albeit just filing away and also wiping down wallets and getting them ready for the free newspaper. Friday morning, as any other morning, entails dealing with post and distributing. Post book is attended to and distribution of the Sight matters free Manx recorded News.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Members have lunch and there is a lot of activity in the reception area. I enjoy the chats, but more importantly, what comes across from the Members is the importance of Sight Matters'.

Spring Coffee Morning



Our Spring Coffee Morning has been postponed

Authors evening

Join author David Elyan for an evening of serendipitous Tales! Take a glimpse into a fascinating life of an art collector, a director of the Bankside Gallery in London, a Chairman of the Royal Academy of Music and a Trustee of the Royal Albert Hall. David will also talk about his encounters with Princess Diana.

To be held on Friday 13th May 7pm at Corrin Court. Tickets are £8 from events@sightmatters.im or call 674727 for more information



Like myself, you are no doubt weary of the effects Covid is having on society. We seemed to be getting through the worst then the numbers suddenly increased alarmingly. This is a worldwide phenomenon as evidenced,

especially in Hong Kong, with the Isle of Man being no exception.

We held our AGM by sending out all relevant papers in January and holding a postal vote in February. Almost half of those that voted agreed they would like to start our monthly members meetings again in the near future at Sight Matters. This was based upon the significantly decreasing incidence of Covid cases. Since then, the numbers have increased at quite a high rate and earlier this week the UK announced they are starting to give boosters to those over seventy-five and other special categories.

Based upon this information, the Trustees have decided to try and hold a meeting in May or June with confirmation circulated once it has been arranged. This will of course take place at Sight Matters on the third Friday in the month chosen and as usual start at 1100hrs. There will be no presentation by a guest speaker for the resumption but an opportunity for those attending to meet again under the socially distanced recommendations and to exchange views on any of the topics they care to raise. For example, how are the planned changes to our care system progressing and what feedback do any of our members have they would like to pass on to Manx Care on matters they would like to see change?.

Since writing the last Newsletter in January, I have visited St Pauls Liverpool twice and due there again on the 4th of April for Eylea injections. The regulations seem to change frequently

but last week Liverpool Airport was as busy as ever and the flight departure/arrivals board full. Nearly every facility being open for business as usual.

One thing that has happened is the Manx Patient Transfer lounge at Liverpool Airport is now very well used. If you have your return boarding card, then the electronic barrier on the first floor is now set to let you in six hours before your flight is due to depart. For some this is a better option instead of waiting for the ticket desk to open around three hours before departure. The Manx Patient Transfer lounge is found as you pass through duty free and before you go down the steps to the main departure hall. On your left is Burger King and to your right there is a hallway with a sign saying "Prayer Room." Go along here for about twenty metres and you will find the sign Manx Patient Transfer pointing to your left. The room has many settees, armchairs and tables with a TV screen showing the arrivals/departure board. There are also water fountains but please note there is no facility to make a hot drink. Such items are readily purchased from the outlets in the departure hall. There are also power points to charge your phone, laptop or iPad if you have the correct lead. So, here is hoping the current trend reverses and we can then start resuming more normal lives. In the meantime, keep safe and keep well. Nigel

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Recipe

Healthy pasta primavera



Prep:10 mins Cook:20 mins

Serves 4

A healthy spaghetti dish full of broad beans, leeks and asparagus tips. Make the most of spring greens with this vibrant, filling pasta recipe

Ingredients

75g young broad beans (use frozen if you can't get fresh)

2 x 100g pack asparagus tips

170g peas (use frozen if you can't get fresh)

350g spaghetti or tagliatelle

175g pack baby leeks , trimmed and sliced

1 tbsp olive oil , plus extra to serve

1 tbsp butter

200ml tub fromage frais or creme fraiche

handful fresh chopped herbs (we used mint, parsley and chives)

parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), shaved, to serve

Method

STEP 1

Bring a pan of salted water to the boil and put a steamer (or colander) over the water. Steam the beans, asparagus and peas until just tender, then set aside. Boil the pasta following pack instructions.

STEP 2

Meanwhile, fry the leeks gently in the oil and butter for 5 mins or until soft. Add the fromage frais to the leeks and very gently warm through, stirring constantly to ensure it doesn't split. Add the herbs and steamed vegetables with a splash of pasta water to loosen.

STEP 3

Drain the pasta and stir into the sauce. Adjust the seasoning, then serve scattered with the cheese and drizzled with a little extra olive oil.

Our Services



Transport

We currently have four Society vehicles, two minibuses, a people carrier and one car. We are therefore able to offer help to many of our members to attend our centre and to travel to and from the various functions and events we hold

throughout the year.

Audio Library

We have a range of mp3 stick audio books. We are supported in the delivery of these audio library books by the IOM Post Office who deliver the books and our weekly news sticks as items free for delivery to visually impaired and blind people.

Outreach visits

A member of our team can arrange to visit you at home/hospital to assist with supporting your needs.

Specialist Equipment

We have a range of assistive technology to help visually impaired and blind people; some of the simplest items like talking clocks, make the biggest difference in helping people with sight difficulties to live more accessible lives

Weekly News

Our well used weekly news service provides an invaluable source of information to in excess of 100 people who rely on hearing the local news brought to them in detail on MP3 sticks; we issue players to all who require this fabulous service.

Social Activities

We run a series of activities designed to enhance the lives of the local blind and visually impaired community, and we have new and exciting ideas being brought forward regularly, some of which provide real challenges to the staff and volunteers who provide our services. We hold luncheon clubs in our centre on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. These consist of a three-course meal with a menu second to none and we can cater for all dietary and most other menu preferences.

Visual Impairment Awareness training

We run courses designed to assist organisations who may occasionally deal with blind and visually impaired clients. We can bring the training to businesses and provide

them with a chance to strengthen their customer service for this vulnerable group of people.

Events

We regularly run events for the Society. These vary from week to week and we have adopted a no holds barred approach to the entertainment provided!

Buddy Service

We provide a carefully matched volunteer Buddy service for some of those of our members who prefer to have occasional one to one assistance in their own homes

Charitable status

We are a charity totally reliant on the contributions and donations of our many wonderful supporters; in particular we are grateful to the people of the Island who continue to give generously to our work. Much of our work is supported and delivered by our fabulous teams of volunteers. Membership is free to anyone living with challenges to their vision and most of our services are provided without charge.

Please feel free to visit our Centre and review our operations. We welcome constructive feedback and thoughts and ideas on how we can further improve our services. We are pleased to offer 'walk and talk' tours of our facilities to organisations of all types.

Sometimes it can be very difficult to find out what help is available. We have a wide range of services and support to offer the best help possible.

We are here to discuss any issues that affect the lives of people with serious sight loss.

Call us confidentially on 674727



SIGHT MATTERS

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Chairman Mr J.C. Fargher MBE, CP, JP, BA, FCA.

Sight Matters is a trading name under Manx Blind Welfare Society Registered Charity No. 132.

If you would like this letter in large print, please contact our office on 674727.

