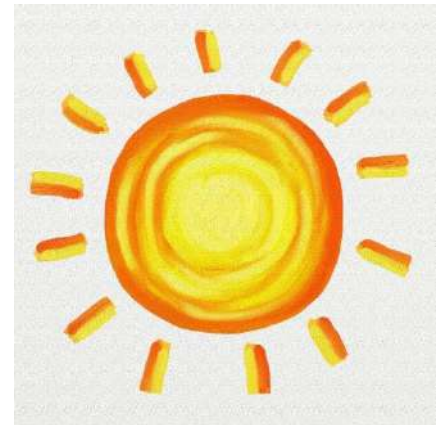
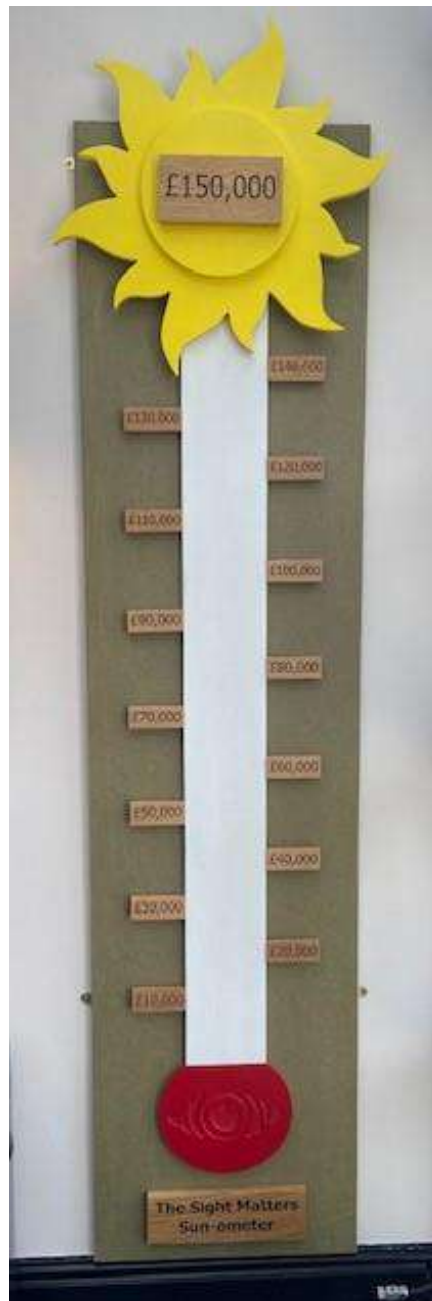
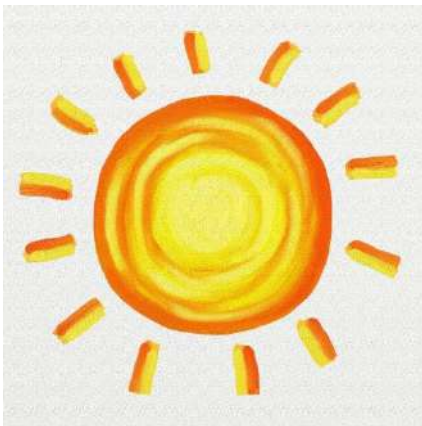


SIGHT MATTERS

Optic Topics

Issue 42

Autumn 2023



SUN-Raising Appeal!

On Friday 22 September, Bright for Sight day, the Sun-Raising appeal was launched!! We are raising funds towards installing solar panels on our building and improving our energy efficiency.

As you are aware, recent fluctuations in the energy market combined with high levels of inflation have put unprecedented strains on many organisations – and we have not been immune. In order to better protect ourselves from future energy market problems and to align ourselves with the Isle of Man's Net Zero ambitions, we are looking to replace our Legacy Gas Boilers with renewable power. We will keep track of our progress through our newly installed "**Sun-ometer**", where some of our key supporters will have their names recorded. We believe that raising these funds to install the solar panels is currently one of the best things that can be done to protect our members' interests, keep our services **free-at-the-point-of-delivery** and sensibly invest in one of our most valuable assets: our premises.

Dying to Talk About Death Conference



The topic of death is often considered taboo, something we avoid discussing until absolutely necessary. However, being prepared and informed about end-of-life matters can alleviate stress and ensure that the wishes of our loved ones can be honoured.

Sight Matters are honoured to host the conference to present the "Dying to Talk About Death" - an event aimed at shedding light on the administration and practicalities of end-of-life matters.

Why Discuss End-of-Life Matters?

Why should we talk about death? Because it's an inevitable part of life, and being prepared can make a world of difference when the time comes. Whether you're planning for your own future, assisting a loved one, or a professional in the field, this conference will offer valuable insights and resources into end-of-life matters.

What to Expect:

"Dying to Talk About Death" will feature local experts who will provide guidance and knowledge on various aspects of end-of-life matters. Here's a sneak peek at some of the topics that will be covered:

1. **Legal**

Considerations: Understanding the legal aspects of end-of-life planning, including wills, trusts, and estate administration.

2. **Personalised Assistance:** The role of end-of-life personal assistant and how support and comfort can be offered during this sensitive time.

3. **Meaningful Celebrations:** The importance of creating personalised and meaningful end-of-life ceremonies and celebrations.

4. **Compassionate Funeral**

Planning: Guidance on planning and organising funeral services with compassion and sensitivity.

5. **Navigating Grief:** Resources and support for individuals and families coping with loss and grief.

Speakers:

Marc Furness:

Marc Furness is an Advocate, Notary Public and Commissioner for Oaths. Marc is a partner in Callin Wild LLC and head of the Private Client department.

Marc qualified as a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales in 2009 (non-practicing) and following relocation to the Island qualified as an Isle of Man Advocate in 2013.

Clara Barker:

Clara Barker is a freelance Personal Assistant who has worked as a consultant for Callin Wild LLC since September 2022.

Clara has spent her working life in customer service, banking and co-ordination-based roles and now provides first rate administrative and practical support to her clients.

Clara has a great deal of experience in Bereavement Services and specialises in end-of-life planning and estate matters.

Keith Salmon:

Keith Salmon is the Regulated Training and Development Manager for Edgewater Associates, one of the Isle of Man's leading financial advice firms, with over 25 years' experience in providing financial advice to Island residents.

Keith supports the Edgewater team of financial advisers to look after the needs of customers when needed most, both in good times and times when things don't go according to plan.

Vicky Christian:

Vicky is a Humanist Celebrant, offering non-religious support and ceremonies.

After a family is bereaved, Vicky meets them to discuss their wishes for the funeral. She learns about the person who has died, and prepares a meaningful script for the family's approval. On the day of the funeral,

she is there to greet the family, prior to conducting the ceremony.

John Boyde:

John is a professional Funeral Director who offers comprehensive funeral arrangements. His extensive first-hand experience with end-of-life matters means that he is perfectly placed to explain the practicalities people face after losing a loved one.

Mary Doyle:

Mary is the CEO of Cruse Bereavement Support Isle of Man, a local charity which provides one-to-one support for adults, young people and children

Why Attend?

"Dying to Talk About Death" is a unique opportunity to learn from local experts who are dedicated to helping individuals and families navigate the practicalities of end-of-life planning and support. You will gain the knowledge and resources needed to make informed decisions and provide comfort during a challenging time.

Event Details:

Date: Friday 03 November 2023

Time: 9.00am - 4pm

Location: Corrin Court, Heywood Avenue, Onchan, IM3 3AP

- **Cost:** £20 including lunch and refreshments

Email events@sightmatters.im to register and secure your spot, or call 674727.

Blind Date

Calling all singletons!!!

Applications are now open for our first 'Blind Date'.

Ooooo la la! Are you ready for the dating event of a lifetime? Get ready to spice up your love life and turn up the charm. On 9th February, just in time for Valentine's day, Sight Matters is rolling out the red carpet for the Isle of Man's very own Blind Date extravaganza!



Hold onto your hats (and maybe even your hearts), because we're about to dive headfirst into the wild world of love, laughter, and surprise connections!

Imagine this: You're standing on stage at the Legion, bathed in dazzling lights, your heart pounding like a bass drum, as the audience eagerly awaits your big reveal. You can't see your date,

and they can't see you – it's all about personality, chemistry, and that irresistible Manx charm! Welcome to Sight Matters' Blind Date event, a dating experience that will leave you laughing, guessing, and just maybe falling head over heels in love.

Want to take part? Well, now's the time

Why Blind Date, You Ask?

If you've ever tuned in to the legendary UK TV show "Blind Date," you know that it's a recipe for hilarity, surprises, and unforgettable moments. And guess what? We're bringing that iconic TV magic right here to the Isle of Man! It's like a real-life game show, but instead of guessing what's behind curtain number three, you're guessing who's behind the screen! It's all about genuine connections, unfiltered fun, and a healthy dose of banter. Who said dating can't be an adventure?

How Does It Work?

Here's the scoop: we're handpicking a batch of bold and charismatic contestants who are ready to take a leap of faith into the world of blind dating. Each contestant will be behind a screen using their wit, charm and banter to get picked by another singleton. Or, perhaps you could be the one asking the questions. We're talking about real-time dating decisions, folks. Will you choose contestant number one, two, or three?

The suspense is real, and the sparks are bound to fly!

What's In It for You?

Aside from a night of unforgettable entertainment and potential love connections, your participation supports us. By entering our Blind Date event, you will help fund essential services, ensuring that you, our members have the support they need to thrive. Love is in the air, and so is the spirit of giving!

So, Isle of Man singles, are you ready to embrace the unknown, take a chance on love, and enjoy a night of laughter, surprises, and maybe a bit of risqué humour?

If so, download a form from our website, email

Khealey@sightmatters.im or phone 674727 and enter our Blind Date event. Could love just be one daring decision away? Love may be blind, but it's about to shine brighter than ever in the Isle of Man!

Application admin fee is £5, with all funds going to Sight Matters. Those chosen to take part have a chance to win a real date with their chosen contestant. And for those who just want to watch, keep an eye on this space: audience tickets will go on sale in the not-too-distant future. Note, applying does not guarantee taking part. **Last date for applications is Thursday 30th November, 2023**

You Matter!

Being told you or someone you care for has a visual impairment that can't be treated can be difficult to come to terms with.

At Sight Matters we are here to help and our new 'You Matter' course is designed to support our members who are **new** to sight loss, by providing them and their carers with the necessary information to enhance their future independence.

This 6-week course runs from our premises in Onchan and starts on **Wednesday 11th October at 3.30pm**

Topics include:

- Emotional effects of sight loss
- Daily living aids and technology
- Benefits & entitlements
- Audio services
- Sighted guiding
- Other sight loss organisations
- Activities
- Mobility & navigation
- Magnification
- Our community
- Eye health

For more information contact 674727 or email enquiries@sightmatters.im

Authors Breakfast

The breakfast will be held at the Comis Hotel on Monday, 27th November at 9.30am. The tickets are £25 per

person to include a full English breakfast buffet.

This year's author is the wonderful local writer, Joanne Clague who was born and raised in Sheffield and now lives in Laxey with her husband, Children and dogs.

As a journalist, Joanne has worked in the north west for thirty years in print, radio and broadcast media before becoming a novel writer of historical fiction, set in nineteenth century Sheffield.

Her series, set in Sheffield in the mid 1800's, begins with 'The Ragged Valley', which follows the Great Sheffield Flood of 1864

Call 674727 or email events@sightmatters.im

Christmas Coffee Morning

Our fabulous festive Coffee Morning will be on **Thursday 7th December at 10.30am** - pop along for Christmas gifts, raffle, cakes or just coffee and chat with your friends at Sight Matters. Entry is £2, payable on the door

The Best Summer!

Our younger members club have had the best summer!!!

Activities included:

Mask making
Art exhibition
Green bowls
Kayaking
Pony Trekking
And lots of food!

I think the pictures show the fun they had better than a write up!





Here are a few of the comments we've received from the children

"I had a fantastic time we all went well horse riding and we groomed too"

'I was frightened at first because I had never ridden a horse before. I really liked Charlie Brown because he was a nice horse, he was big and brown. I'm not frightened of riding horses now.'

From a parent:

**** has had a blast at all the activities and she has also been talking about the other girls and is excited to see them again.**

Our groups promote independence, build a support network, help the children to socialise and are fun!!!

If you would like more information on this group or to help support it, please contact us.



Arts Exhibition



The Sight Matters Arts Exhibition was a huge success, far better than we could have imagined. Members demonstrated what people with a visual impairment CAN do! The work was of a very high calibre - it was amazing to see. A big thank you to everyone that helped to make it happen and all who attended the exhibition. Also, an extra big thank you to all the members who submitted their work to exhibit.

At the private viewing of the art work, the Lieutenant Governor, (his Excellency), Sir John Lorimer, was given the very hard task of judging the Sight Matters Christmas card competition. There were two categories, under and over 18's. 5-year-old McKenzie Holmes won the under 18's with his card 'It's nearly time' and 101-year-old James Fenton won the over 18's category with his 'Snow family' card. Well done to both. The cards will be on sale soon at the Centre, the VIP Store & in all Shoprite stores. Price is £6 for a pack of 10 or £10 for 2 packs.

Coast 2 Coast





Adults Monthly Activity Club

The summer has been busy with a variety of different events ranging from listening to brass bands - the wonderful Wurlitzer organ - the fabulous Andre R

Sunday 29th October 10.30-12 – Christmas Market at Mount Murray Golf Club

This is a great opportunity to shop local and get some early Christmas presents with over 70 stalls.

Thursday 2nd November 7.30pm – Buddy Holiday & the Cricketers at the Gaiety

Transport yourself back in time for this breath-taking rock 'n' roll show where the hits just keep on coming - That'll Be the Day, Peggy Sue, Heartbeat, It Doesn't Matter Anymore, Raining in My Heart, Oh Boy! –and much, much more. Whatever the season, whatever the excuse to party, make your heartbeat a little faster & get those feet a tapping and hands clapping.

Thursday 9th November 5.30pm - South Social Meal Falcons Nest Port Erin

Get in touch with Julie (674727) if you live in the South and fancy meeting up for a chin wag and a lovely meal.

Monday 13th November -Have a go Acoustic Shooting at Corrin Court (1/2 hour slots)

Back by popular demand. Try something new and have a go at shooting an air rifle by listening to sound to. This is a sport for any degree of sight loss and you do not need to

have any previous experience. The session is safely supervised.

Acoustic shooting uses specially adapted rifles fitted with special sights, which measure the level of light reflected from a target. Participants wear special headphones to hear a sound, which becomes more frequent and a higher tone the closer they are to the target.

The monthly activity groups have been a great success in the East and North of the island. The sessions which are a mix of craft, games and social activities are a great way to try new activities, meet new people or catch up with old friends. Transport is provided.



Thank you



Our member Aidan, his siblings Callum and Emilie and their mum Gemma Bentham who all walked the Coast 2 Coast last Sunday along with their Dad Sam and their dog, Comet. They all walked the 12 miles, brilliant given that Callum is 8 and Emilie 7.

Callum said his feet didn't suffer any ill effects, Emilie said hers took a couple of days. We hope they'll be back next year.

Emilie and Callum raised an amazing £814 through sponsorship which will all go towards running our support services.

A huge thank you to Val and the team at Mylchreest Court for raising an amazing £450.92 at their recent swinging 60's night . Thanks too to Ballaugh Bowling Club for the £400 they donated to us.

Nine-year-old James Teece visited Sight Matters with his cubs' group and decided he wanted to raise funds for us. James cycled 16 miles with his Dad Alex and raised a fantastic £160!!



Thanks to everyone who donates. All monies raised stays on Island and goes towards helping the Manx people with a visual impairment. As a financially independent charity, we depend on the generosity of people like James to help us to continue delivering our services.

If you would like to know more about our services please get in touch!

From tiny acorns, mighty oaks grow

Stuck for that Christmas gift or want to remember that special person? Why not purchase a lasting memory with an engraved leaf or acorn, to be placed on our **Giving Tree**?

The giving tree is a handmade, 3D, wooden display of a large oak tree, attached to a wooden board, with branches running of it. It is situated on the wall in our headquarters Corrin Court.

Prices start at £25 for a silver leaf (5cm x 3cm) and go up to £500 for a gold acorn (9cm x 7cm). Your message can be up to 35 characters on smaller items and 45 on larger. For more details contact us on 674727 or enquiries@sightmatters.im or download a form at www.sightmatters.im/support-us/the-giving-tree

www.sightmatters.im/support-us/the-giving-tree



Volunteering

Thank you to all our fantastic volunteers for all their hard work and dedication. They provide invaluable support to us and our members and we could not run our services without them. In August & September volunteers provided approx. 2000 hours to volunteering!!!!

Jenny who volunteers on reception says "I started volunteering in 2012 after I retired from my job as a school administrator. I wanted to do something to fill a morning or afternoon and to feel I was helping in the community in some small way". She added "from volunteering I have gained new skills, improved confidence, better mental & physical health & wellbeing and made new friends."

At present we are looking to recruit more volunteer drivers to help us to transport members to and from our luncheon clubs or activities. This could mean driving a minibus or a car on a regular basis or ad hoc. Previous experience of minibus driving is not essential as full training will be given.

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 or in 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. The training can be brought to businesses providing a chance to strengthen the 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 of the Society 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 view 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

Corrin Court, Heywood Avenue, Onchan, Isle of Man, IM3 3AP

☎ (01624) 674727 | ✉ enquiries@sightmatters.im | www.sightmatters.im

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.

